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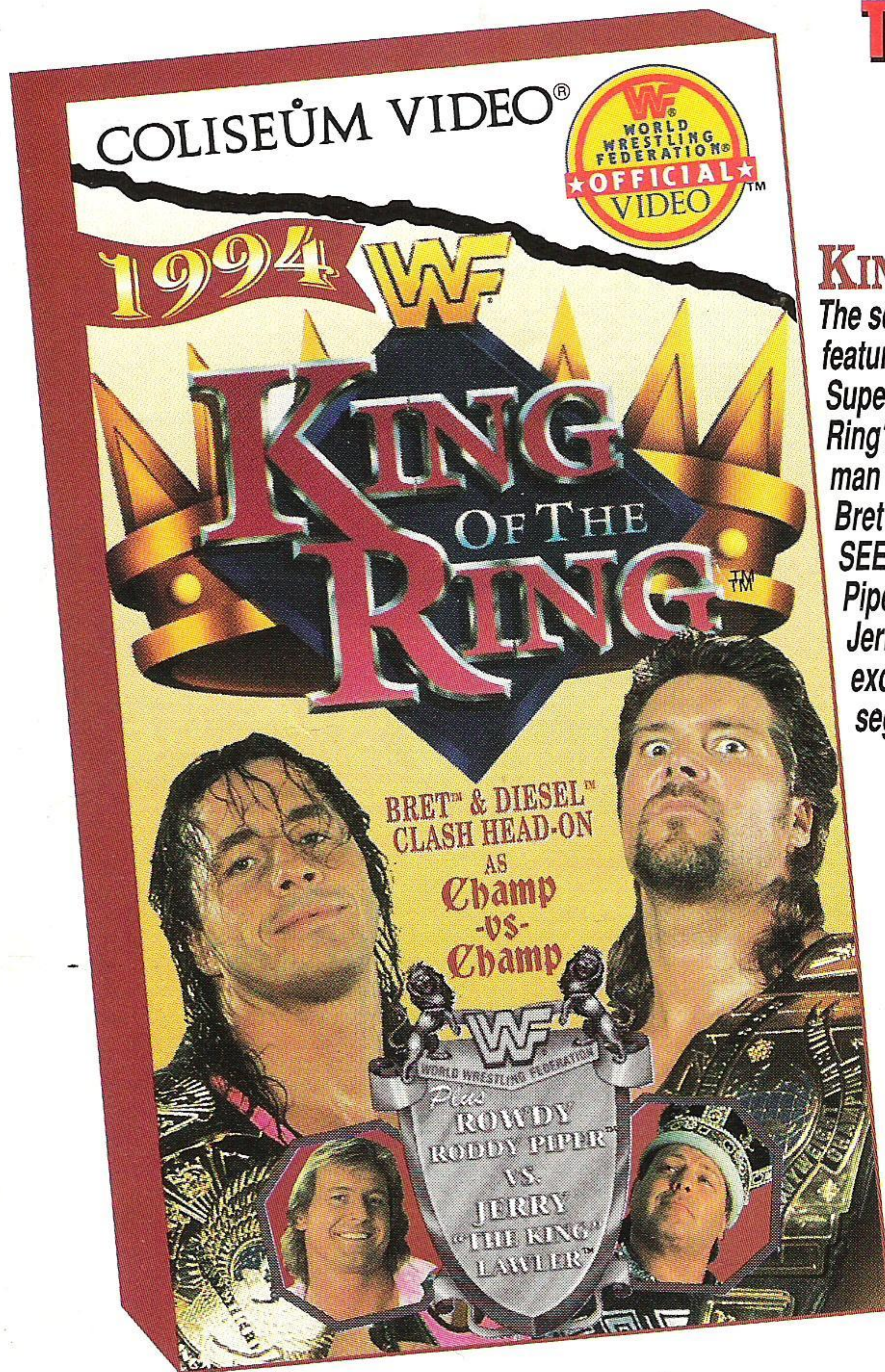
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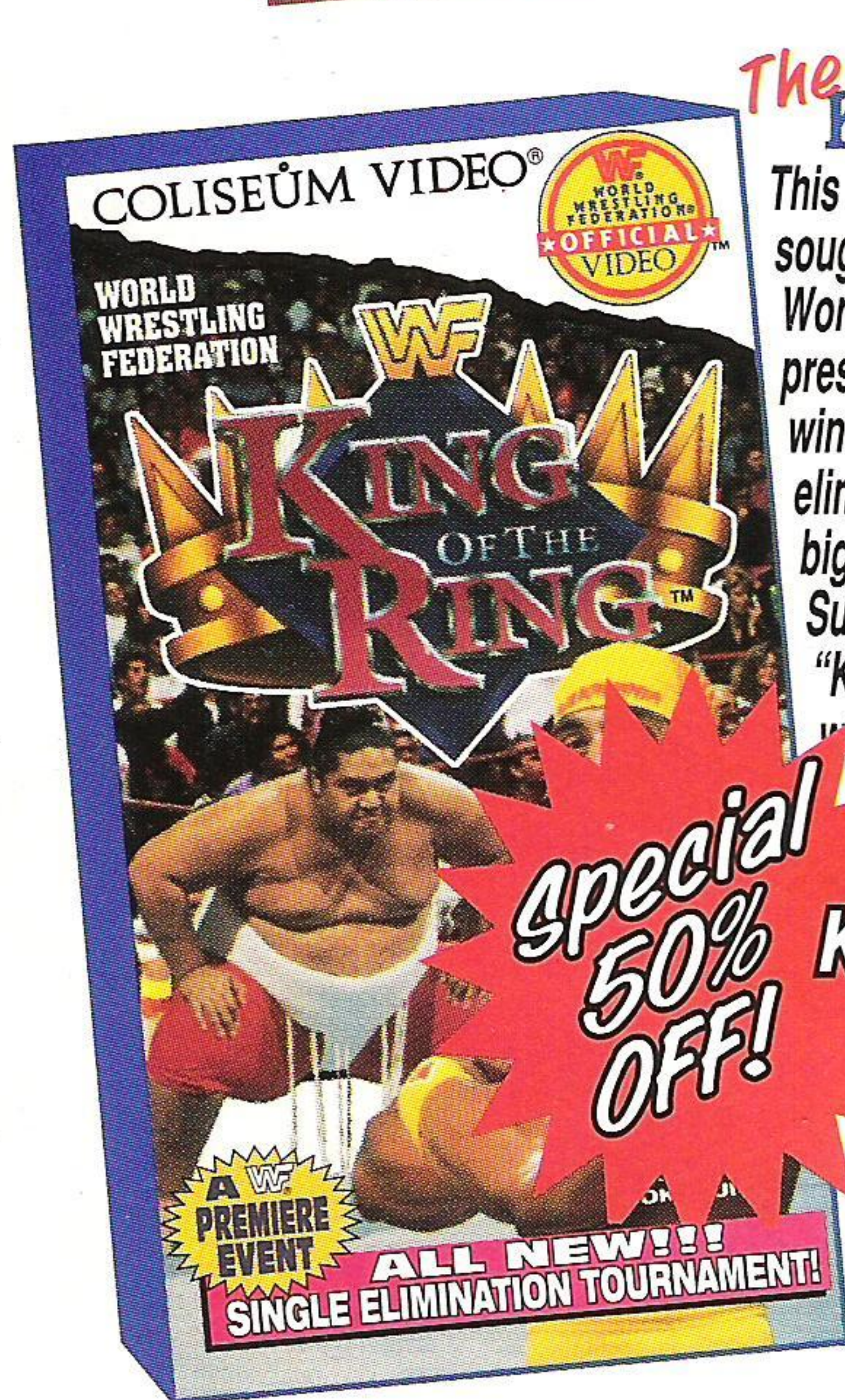
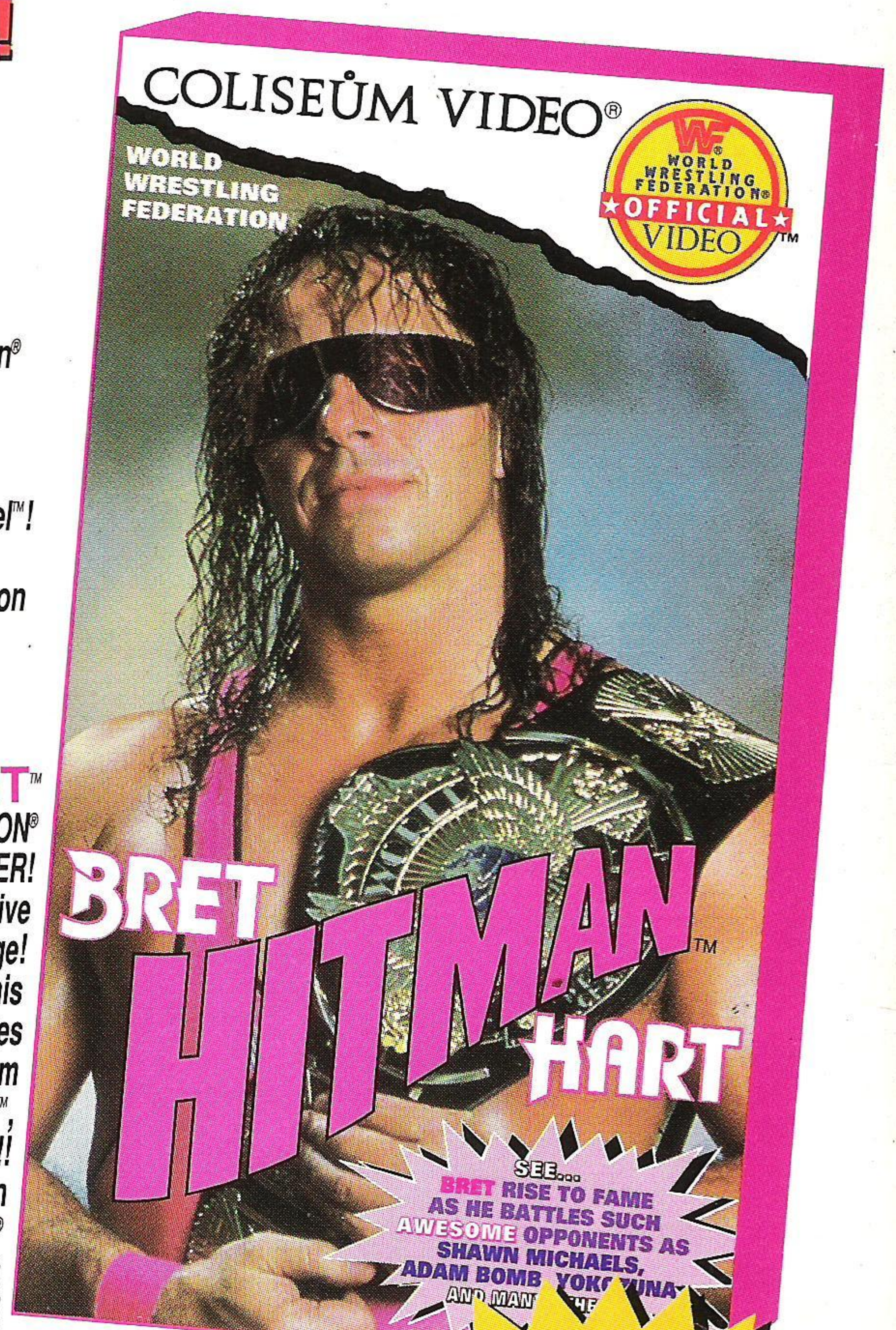
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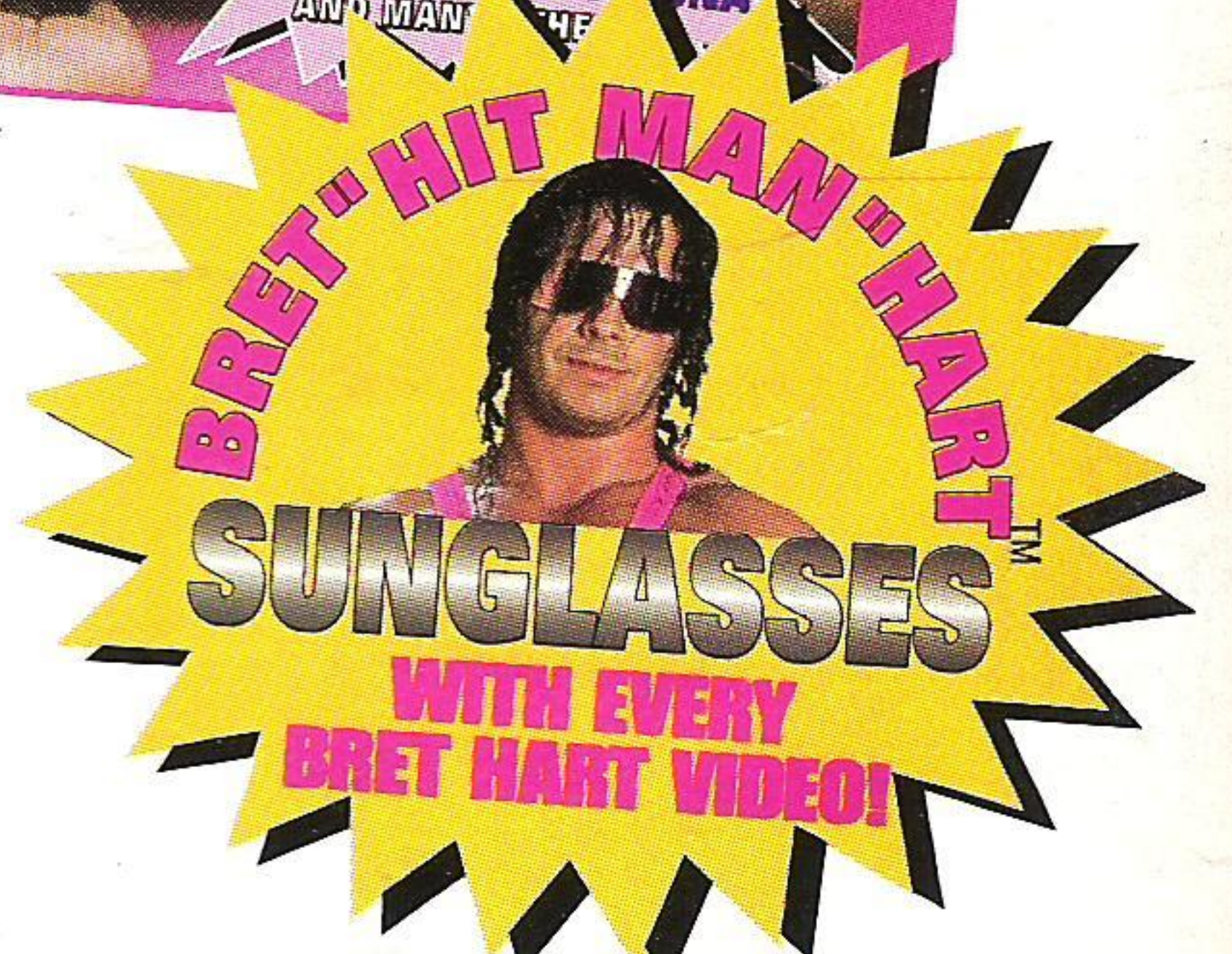
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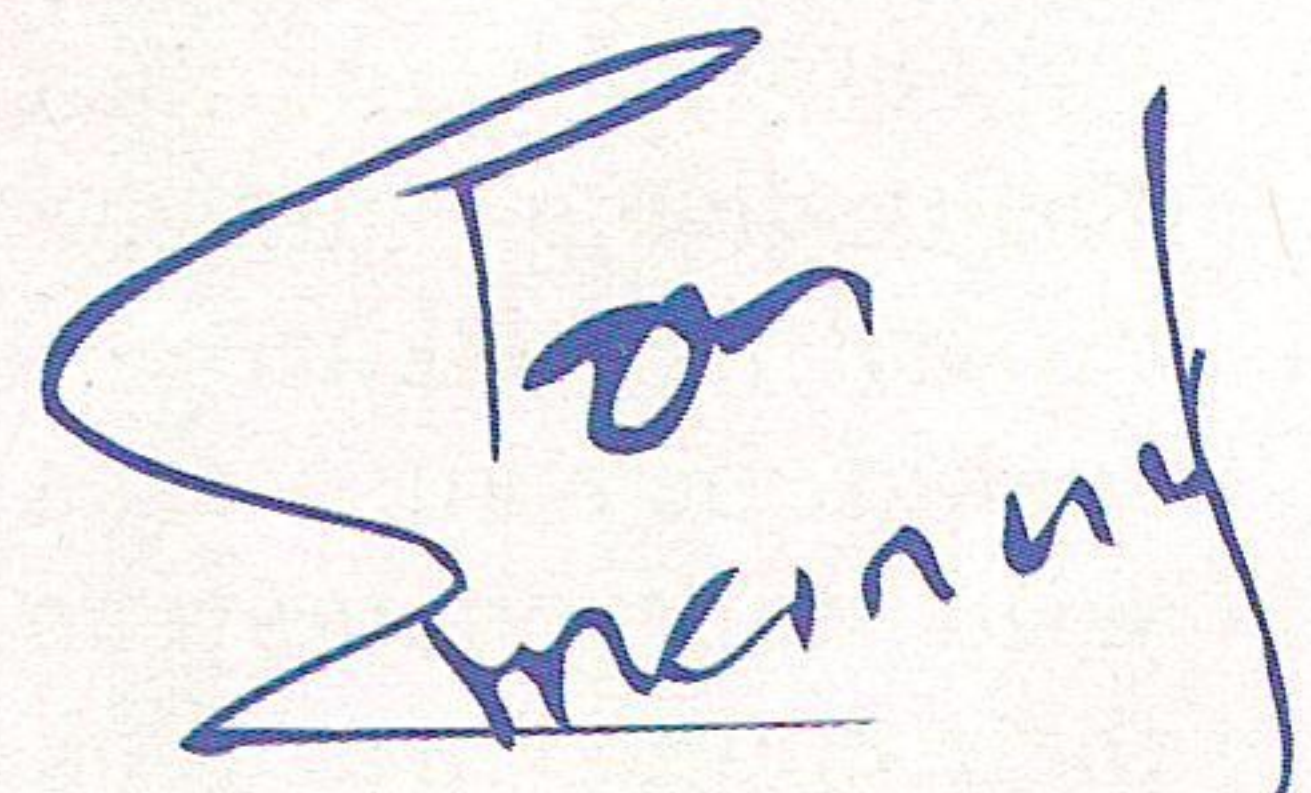
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In the history of the World Wrestling Federation, there has never been a champion with more heart and determination than Bret "Hit Man" Hart. Bret has defied all odds in becoming the only athlete to not only capture the Federation's Triple Crown—the Federation Championship, Intercontinental Championship and Tag Team Championship—but to capture that crown twice.

He is indeed the Excellence of Execution. Not only is the Hit Man a great champion inside the ring, but Bret is also a great human being on the outside. He is a devoted family man and a man well-respected by his colleagues.

Without further ado, it is a great privilege to present you with this *Wrestling Spotlight* on Bret Hart. I speak for the entire organization when I say that we are honored to have Bret Hart as World Wrestling Federation Champion!

Thomas H.W. Emanuel
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief



Thomas H.W. Emanuel
Publisher &
Editor-in-Chief

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HART

BY KEITH ELLIOT GREENBERG

All those years of being twisted and stretched in his father's "dungeon" had finally paid off.

Bret "Hit Man" Hart, son of legendary wrestler and promoter Stu Hart, had been training for this moment since he'd been a small boy in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Stu didn't want his sons to be accused of getting any special breaks when they made it to the squared circle; therefore, the basement sessions were filled with viselike headlocks, excruciating figure-fours and painful nerve holds in order to give his boys the proper education. Now, with Stu looking on, Bret had made his father proud. The date was October 12, 1992—Canadian Thanksgiving—and the crowd in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, was wild with ecstasy as their countryman took the World Wrestling Federation Championship Belt from Ric Flair with the celebrated Sharpshooter.

Bret had not only won wrestling's most coveted trophy, but the triple crown—the dis-

tinction of having captured the World Wrestling Federation's Tag Team, Intercontinental and Championship belts in a single career. Around the world, wrestling pun-

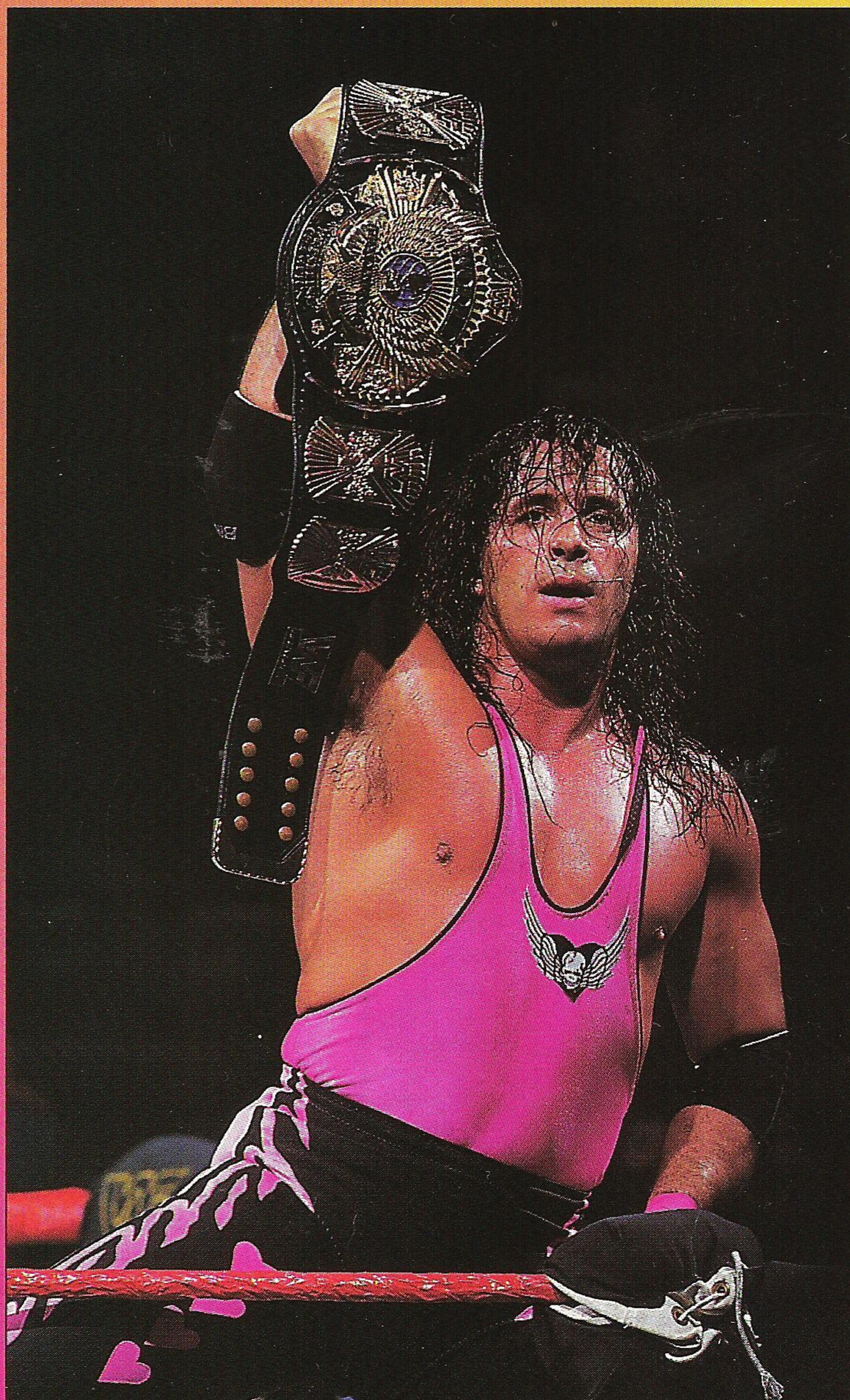
dits predicted that Hart would reign well into the next century.

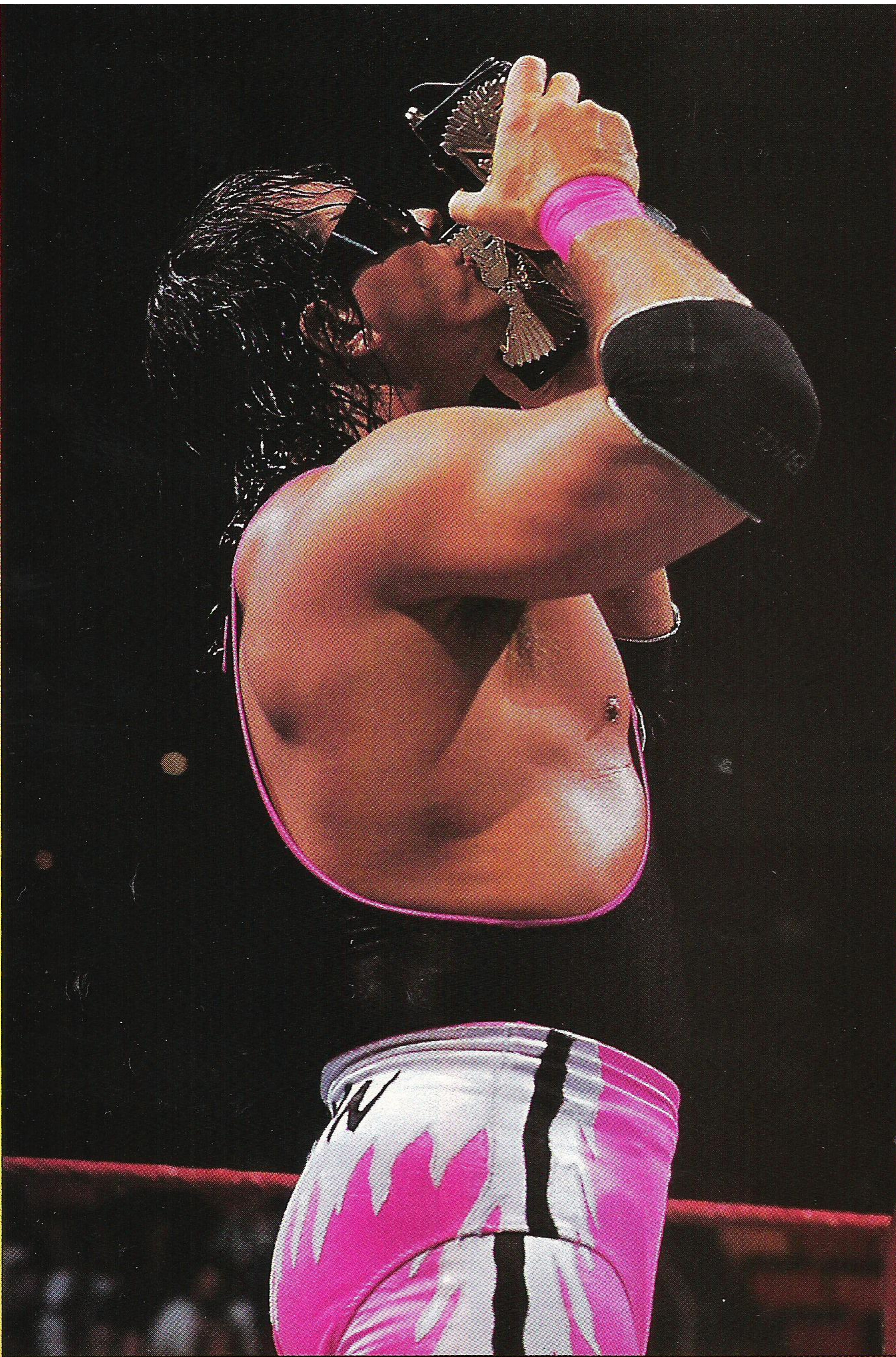
Unfortunately, he didn't live up to their expectations. At *WrestleMania IX*, he'd have the title robbed

from him in a plot conceived by Yokozuna and his manager, Mr. Fuji. But that didn't stop the Hit Man from believing in himself. It took him another year of emotional highs and lows, but at *WrestleMania X* he finally recaptured the prize many say he'd deserved all along.

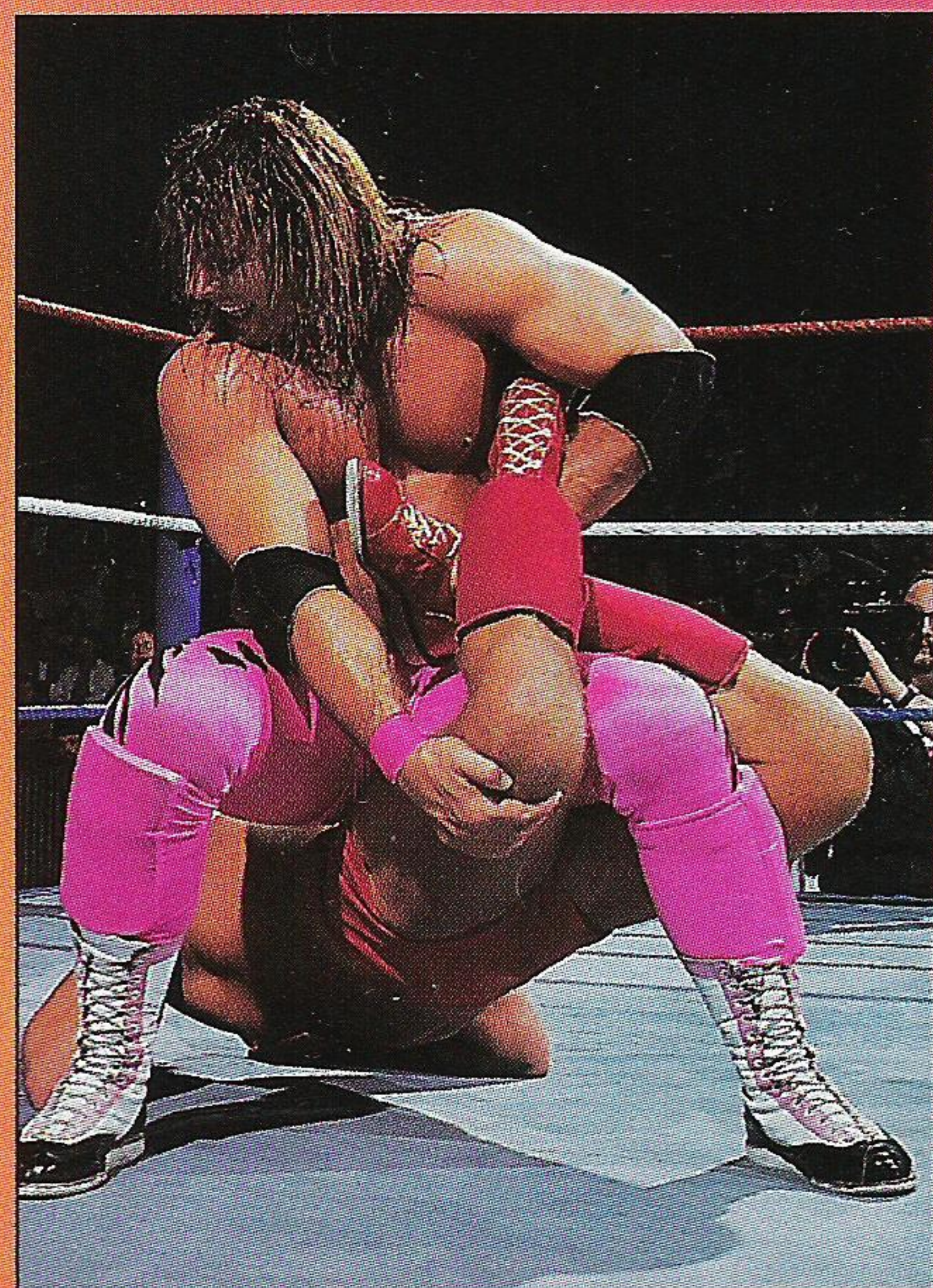
From the day he first snagged the belt, he made himself vulnerable, taking on an array of talented contenders on an almost nightly basis. Critics claimed that Bret was trying to prove too much and would burn himself out in the process. Instead, he appeared to get better with each title defense.

"After years of seeing Hulk Hogan with the championship, many fans had a 'bigger is better' philosophy," Hart recalls. "I'd hear remarks that I was too small or not powerful enough. But my father had raised me to *wrestle*, and that's





HIT
MAN'S
JOURNEY



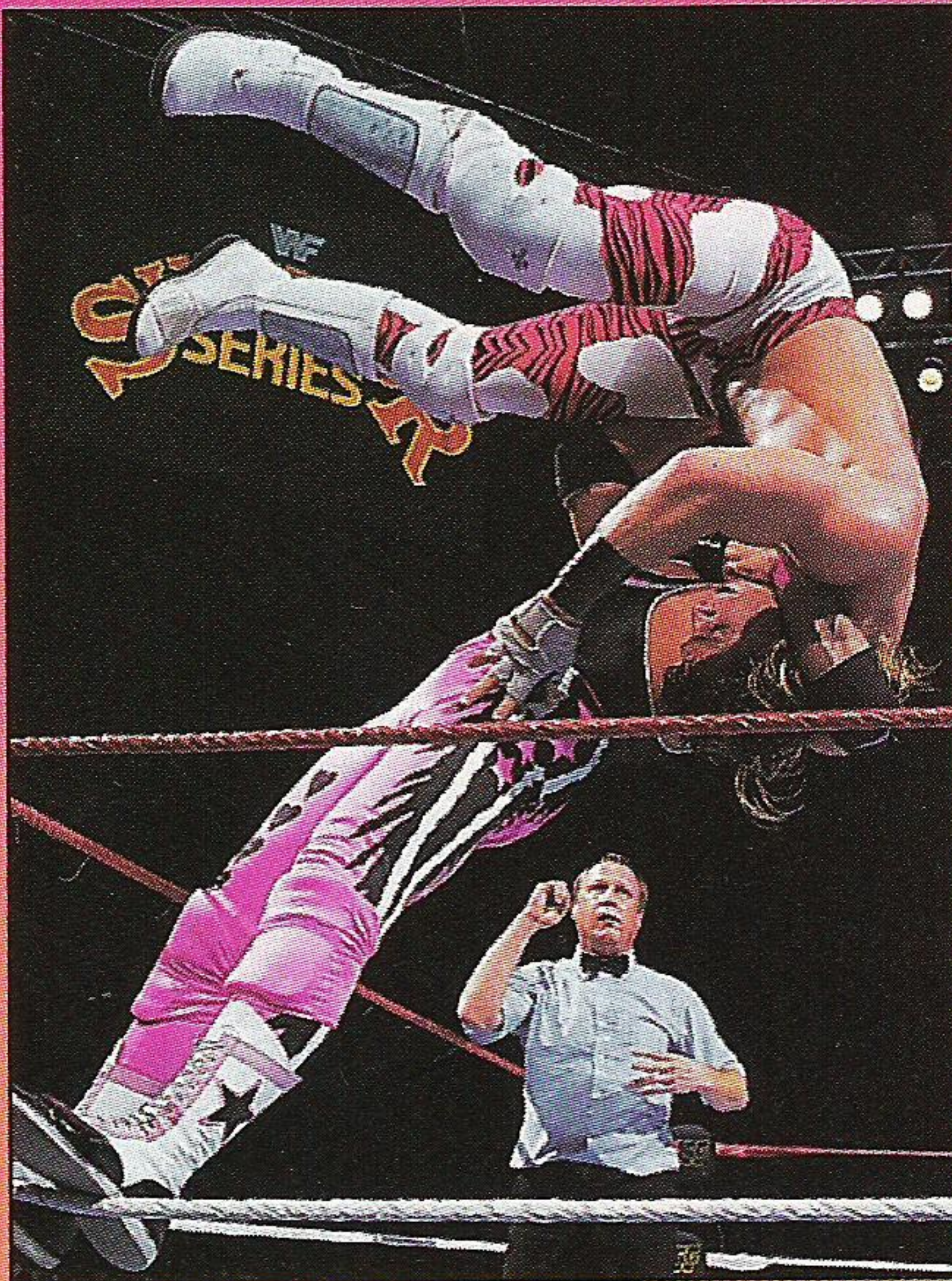
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A RETROSPECTIVE ON BRET HART

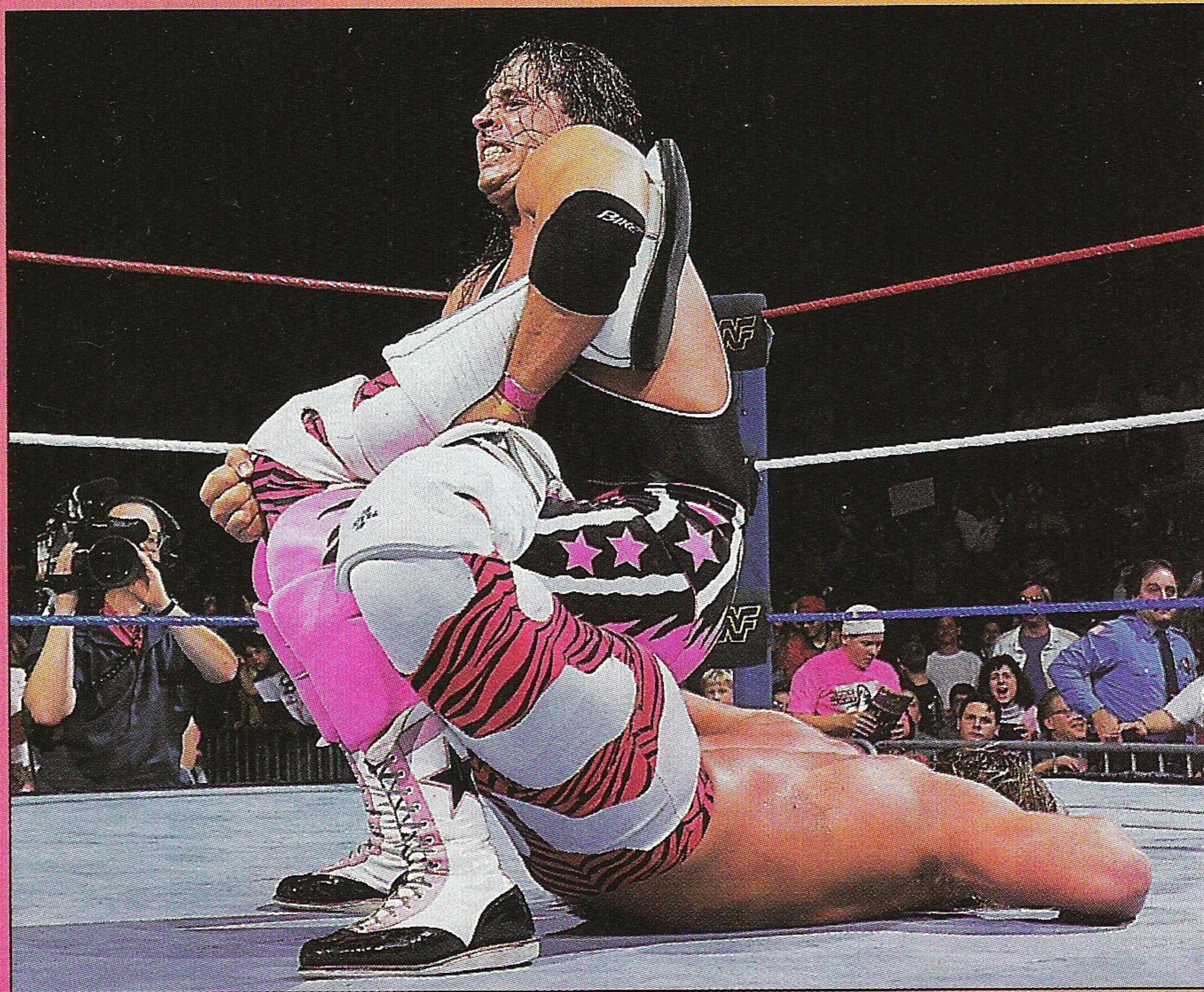
what I did every night to retain the Championship Belt."

At the 1992 *Survivor Series*, Bret went against Shawn Michaels. Despite the differences in outward appearance—Michaels was cocky, while Bret was subdued—the rivals had a great deal in common. Each had gained fame in the World Wrestling Federation as a part of a tag team and had recently broken out on his own. Once the bell rang, both were masters of their craft, intimately understanding the scientifics of the game but able to instantly make the transition to brawling, power moves and high flying if the situation warranted that.

The Hit Man wanted to win this contest by the rules. Michaels was willing to win at any cost. He punished Bret outside the ring, smashing his head into the steel ring post and slamming him on the arena



The champion implemented his scheme as the overconfident Michaels was climbing the turnbuckles. When Shawn sailed from the top strand, Hart struggled to his feet and astounded everyone by grabbing

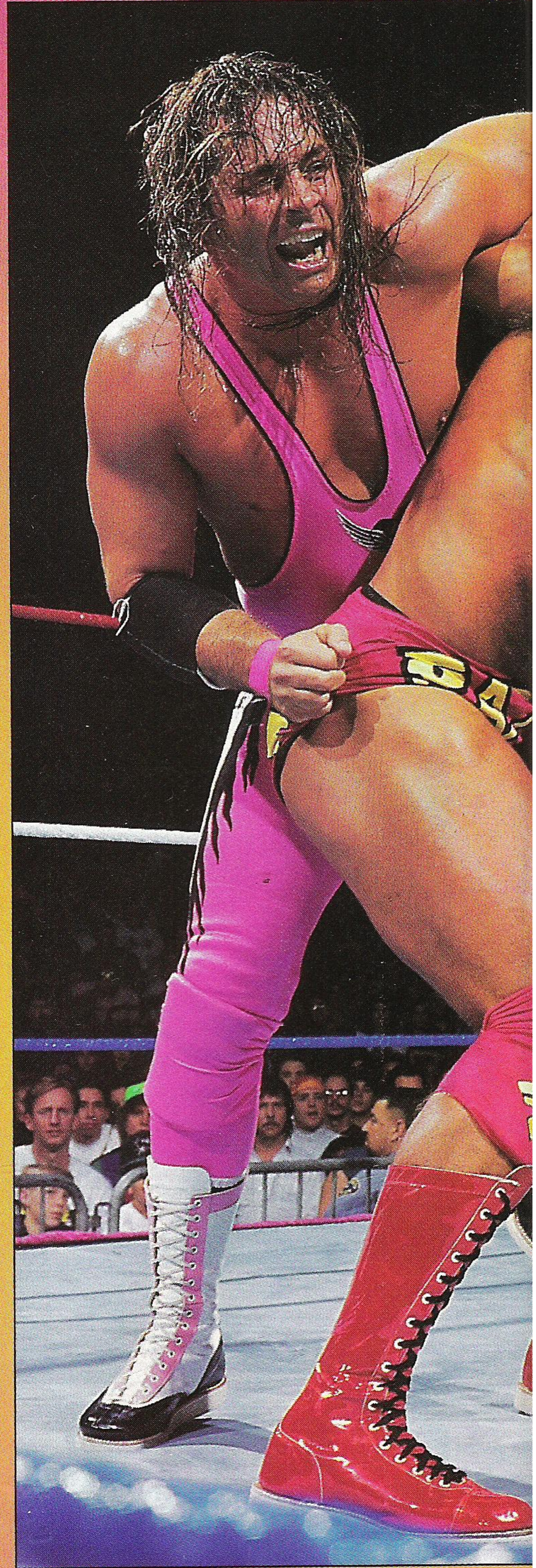


floor. Back between the ropes, Shawn put Hart on the mat with a high back-bodydrop and a spinning rear kick. Even after Bret rebounded with a flying elbow, the Heartbreak Kid quickly reversed the tide, stepping out of the way of a charge as Hit Man flew into the ropes.

"My offensive strategy wasn't working," Hart admits. "I had to come up with a defensive plan—and I had to do it fast."

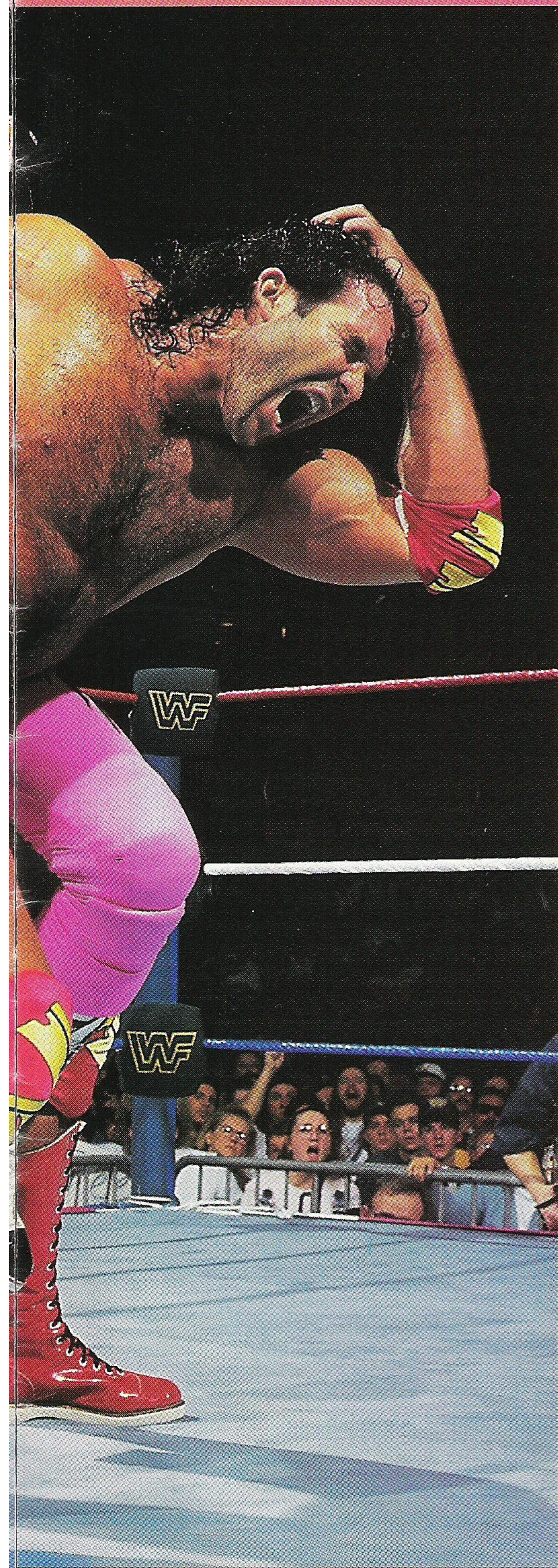
the challenger's legs in mid-air. Suddenly, it was Michaels on the mat, trapped in the Sharpshooter. Bret Hart had kept his Championship Belt and had proved his resilience to his skeptics.

But that didn't deter his enemies. Hoping to position himself in front of the numerous other challengers, Razor Ramon got Bret's attention by targeting what the Hit Man cherished most: his family. While Hart's



younger brother Owen was giving a television interview, the Cuban bad boy rushed in, clotheslining the Rocket and battering him with an aluminum garbage can.

"Do whatever you want to me—I can take it," Hart says, "but make sure you keep my family out of it. Razor couldn't. Owen and I were very close at the time, and truthfully, I didn't even care about the title. I wanted revenge."



That's what Bret got in the main event of the 1993 *Royal Rumble*. Hart was the underdog in size and strength, but he overcame the challenge with heart. Despite enduring a flurry of elbows, a debilitating abdominal stretch and a crunching bearhug, Hart never came close to



quitting. He fired back with equal intensity, pummeling Ramon with punches, then tying up the mighty Latino's tree-limb legs in the Sharpshooter. His machismo notwithstanding, Razor submitted.

Now Hart was ready for his biggest test yet: the monstrous former sumo champion Yokozuna. Even Bret's most ardent supporters were certain that he couldn't survive this confrontation. Yokozuna outweighed Hit Man by hundreds of pounds and had flattened virtually every other major opponent until that point in time.

Still, the Hit Man sounded confident before their clash among the glittery trappings of Caesars Palace

in Las Vegas at *WrestleMania IX*. "Yokozuna's the biggest challenger I've ever faced," he joked with the press corps. "So I guess this'll be my biggest victory."

He seemed to be living up to his expectations, surprising his massive adversary with a running dropkick at the opening bell. When Yokozuna shouldered him out of the ring, Hit Man reached under the ropes, tripped the onetime sumo standout, hopped onto the apron and catapulted onto the contender.

With Yokozuna's manager, Mr. Fuji, urging him on, the hefty challenger came back with legdrops, clotheslines and karate thrusts. As Yokozuna tried lifting the champ for



a bodyslam, Bret reached out toward the ropes for leverage, pulling off a turnbuckle in the process. Spotting the exposed metal, Yokozuna attempted to bash the titlist's head into the corner. But Hit Man re-

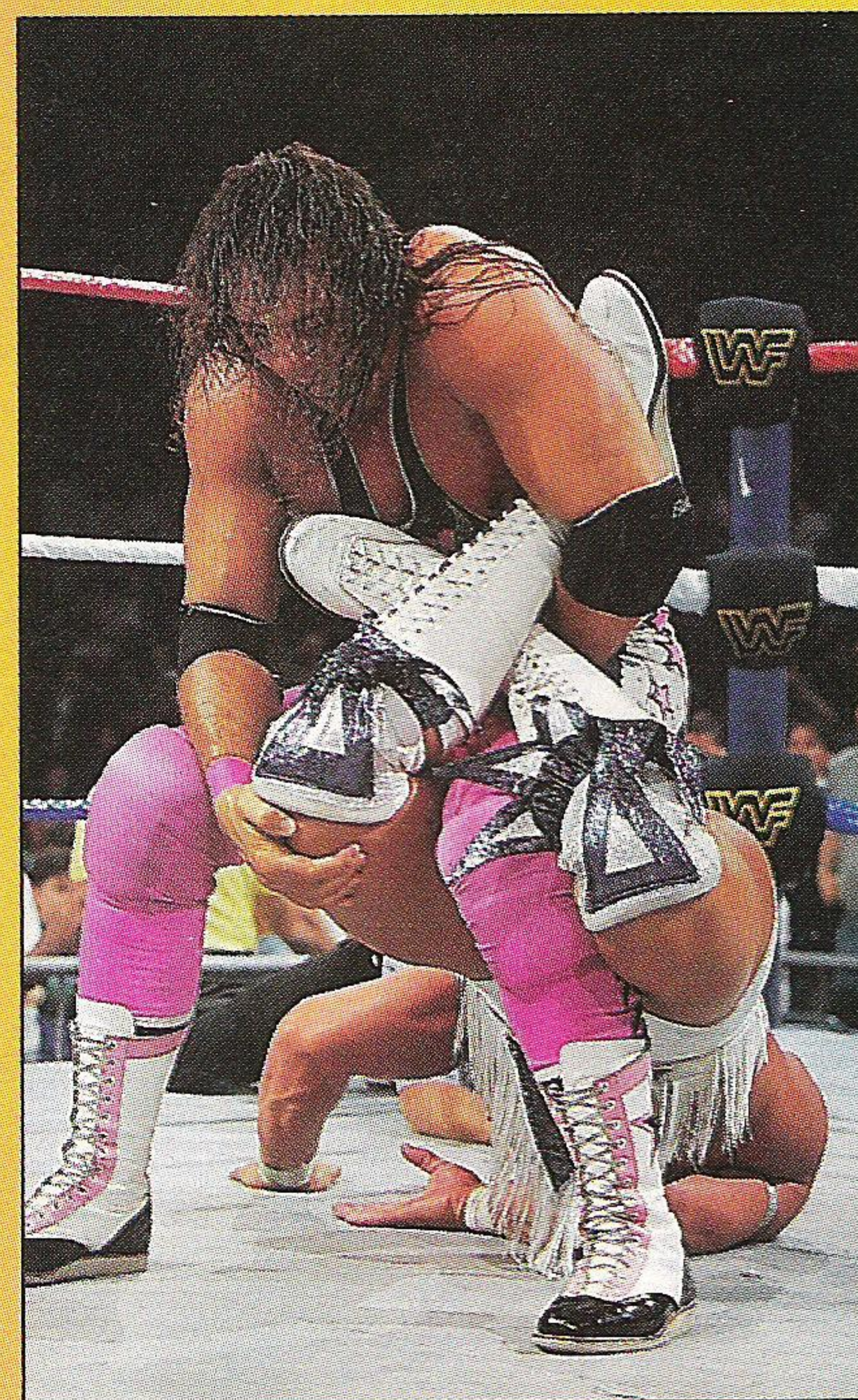
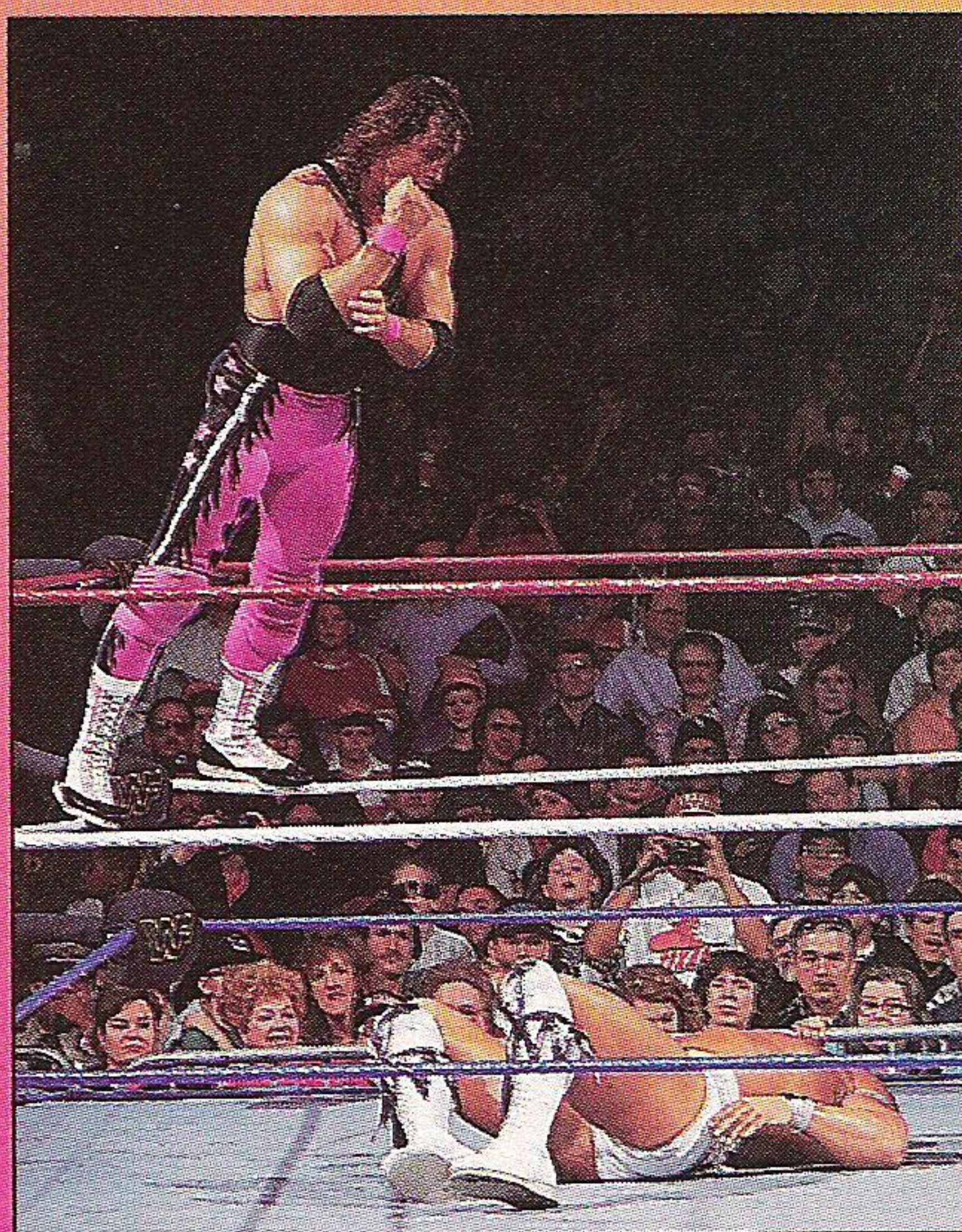


versed the maneuver, knocking the monstrous Yokozuna off balance. As the Far Eastern menace flopped onto his belly, Bret clamped on the Sharpshooter.

But, this time, the cards would be stacked against the Canadian dynamo. From his position at ringside, Fuji hurled a fistful of salt into the champion's face, blinding him. Unable to see, Hart swiftly fell victim to a pinfall loss. After the most sensational 175 days of his life, Bret Hart was again a man without a belt.

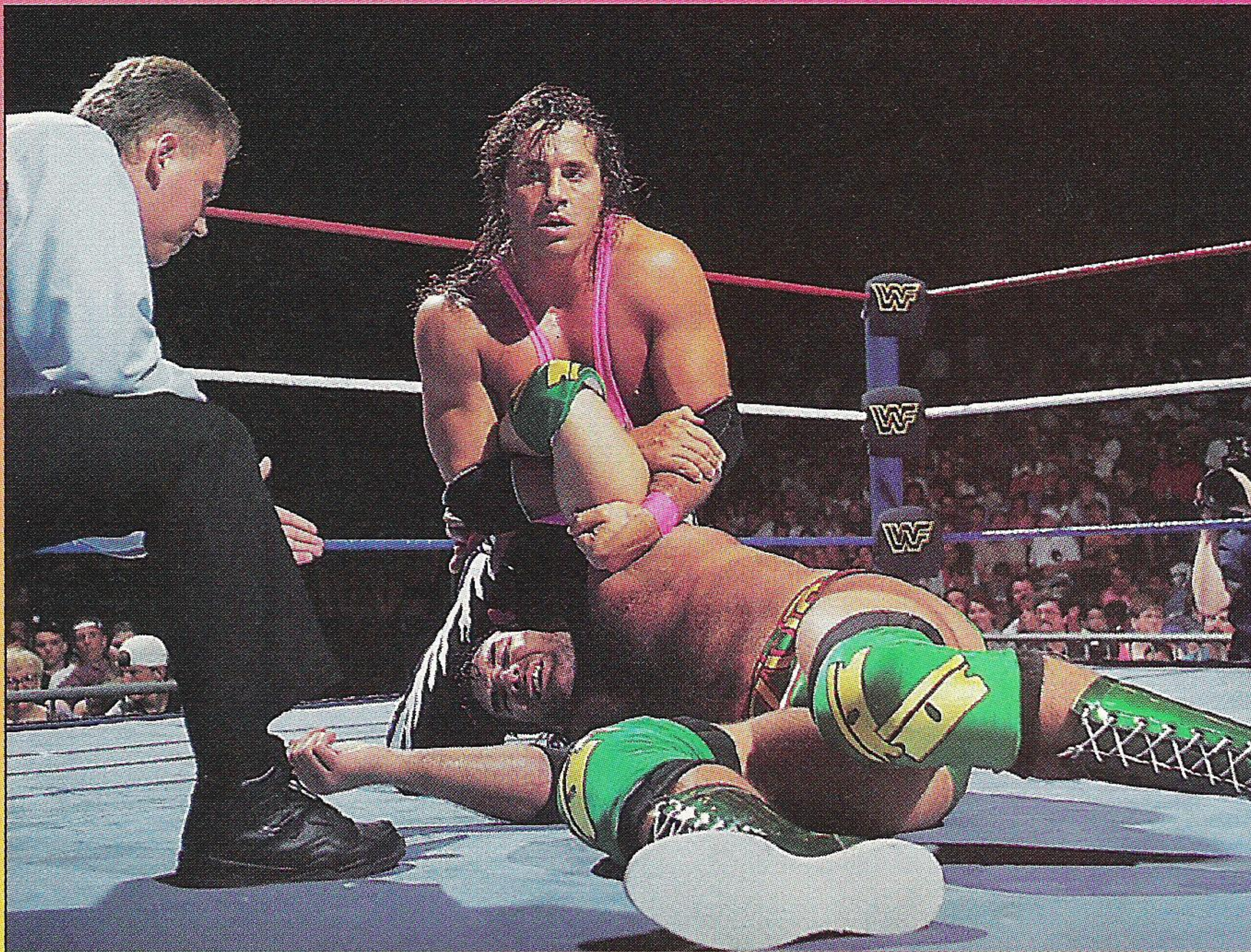
"I'm not going to lie and say it wasn't discouraging," Hart concedes. "To be on top and then lose it in such a treacherous way—it just isn't fair. But I didn't want to become a bitter person because bitterness only eats you up from the inside. I decided I'd just work on becoming a better wrestler. Somewhere down the line, I knew I'd get back the belt."

Meanwhile, he had unfinished business with others in the World Wrestling Federation. In an unexpected encounter at a special breakfast prior to *WrestleMania IX*, he'd been knocked out by the steel-plated forearm of Lex Luger. Hart felt that Luger was "taking a shortcut to make a name for himself" and embarked on a series of matches with the man who was then known as the Narcissist.



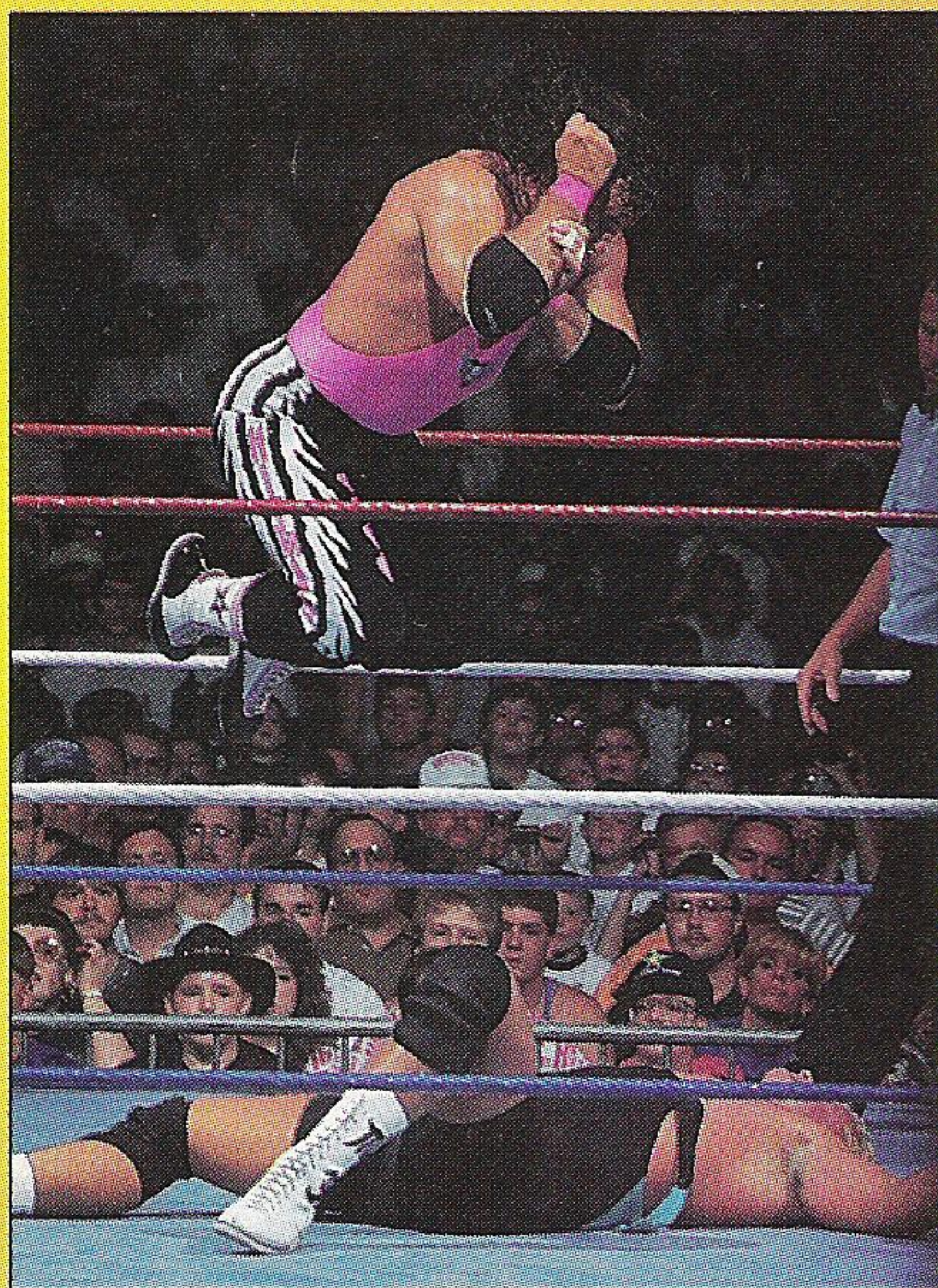
"Bret Hart taught me a lot about wrestling and a lot about myself," Luger says of the battles. "In the ring, he had such perseverance, such determination, it was inspiring. And he had a special connection with the fans I didn't have back then. I never told anyone this before, but those matches with Bret had a very powerful effect on my life. Afterward, I wanted to be the kind of wrestler he was."

Bret's discouragement over the title loss was replaced by a new sense of conviction following his clashes with Luger. He entered the *King of the Ring* tournament on June 14, 1993, displaying a new resolve.



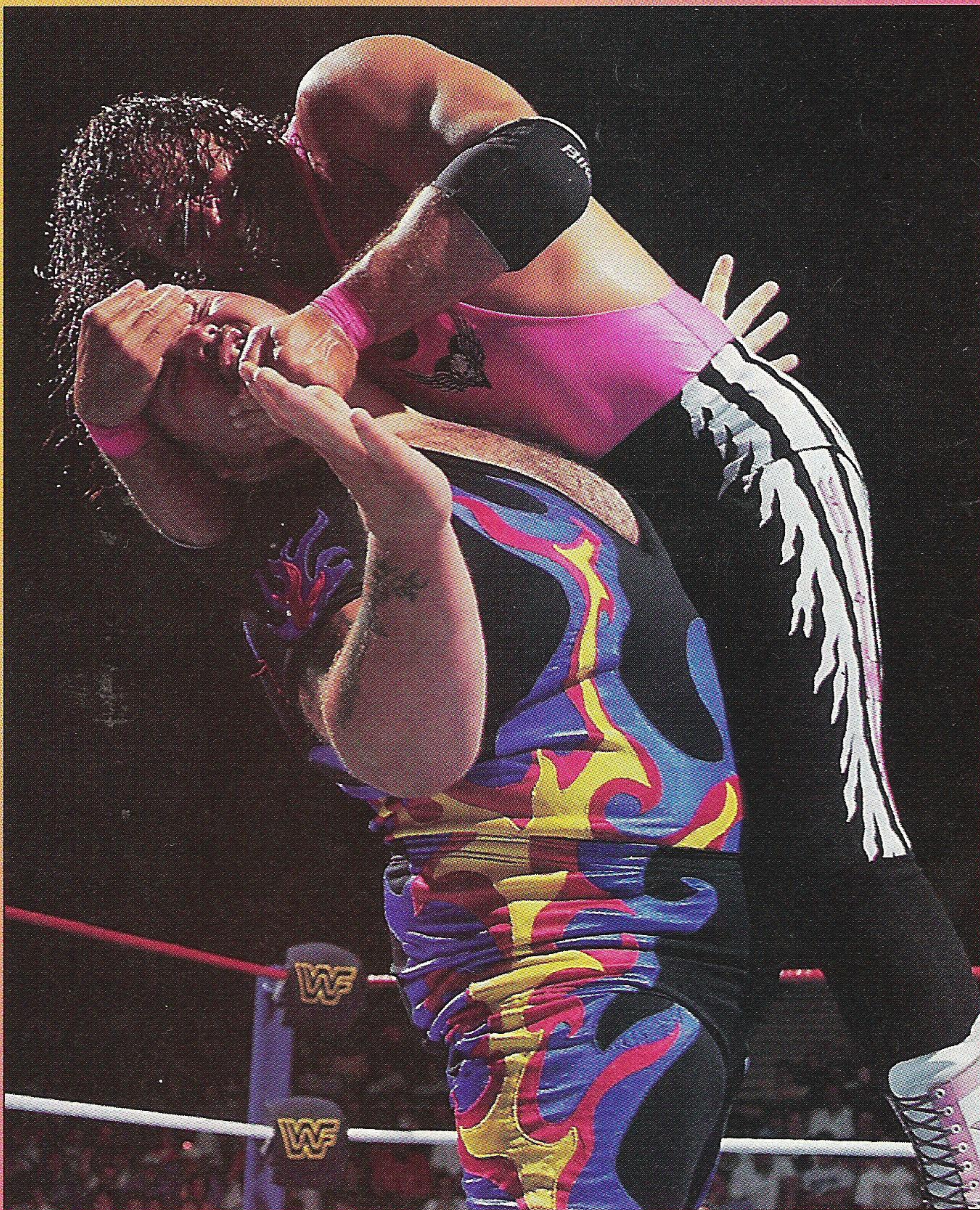
bound, as the match turned into a classic. Although the action started out being scientific, Perfect eventually tried gaining the lead with roughhouse tactics. Hart responded in kind, then overwhelmed his talented foe with a superplex and a figure-four leglock. Even when Perfect rallied, lifting Hit Man into the dreaded Perfect-plex, Bret found a way to keep his lead, reversing the maneuver by tumbling over the top rope with his golden-haired rival. Finally, Perfect caught Hit Man in an inside cradle, but—pumped with momentum—Bret reversed the move, garnered the pinfall and ascended into the finals of the tournament.

The only thing between Bret Hart and the *King of the Ring* title was rugged Bam Bam Bigelow. Sensing



The first match of the tourney pitted him against old nemesis Razor Ramon, who got an early advantage by beating on Hart outside the ring and punishing him with a fallaway slam and powerslam. But Hit Man fought back from the brink of defeat, bursting out of his opponent's deadly Razor's Edge, then shifting weight during a suplex attempt and falling on top of Ramon to gain a stunning triumph.

In the semifinals, Hart collided with another second-generation superstar, Mr. Perfect. Fans were spell-

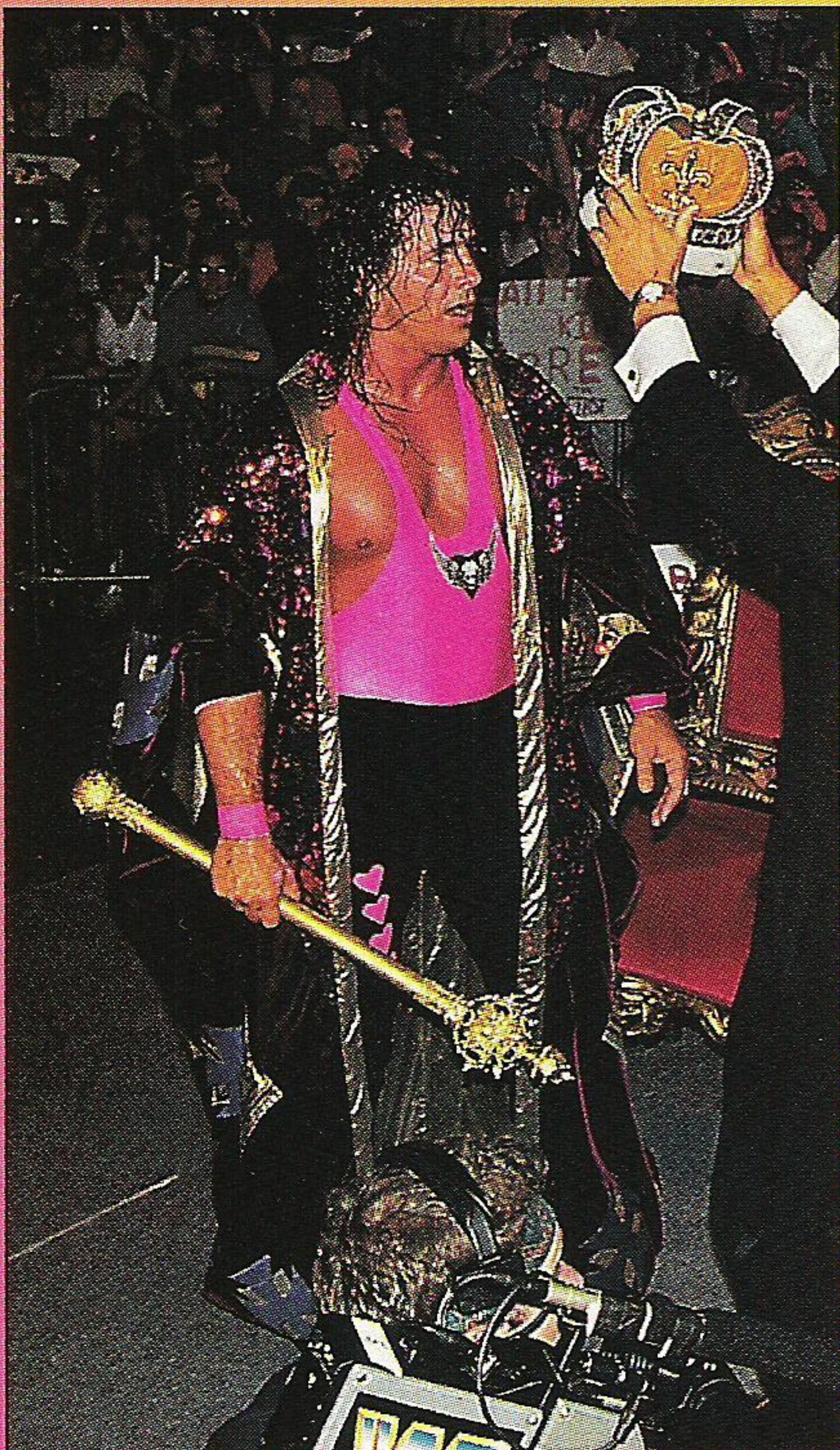


A RETROSPECTIVE ON BRET HART

the former champion's fatigue from his battle with Perfect, Bigelow laced into his opponent, injuring him with a bearhug and a series of suplexes. Hart rebounded, reversing an Irish whip, which shot the Beast of the East into the guardrail outside the ring. The Hit Man then climbed onto the ring apron and unleashed a flying elbow onto Bam Bam as he lay on the arena floor. The match might have ended then had not Bigelow's adviser, Luna Vachon, snuck out of the dressing room and smashed Hit Man with a chair. "All I remember is the pain of that chair coming down on me," Hart says. "After that, I think that I blacked out for a few minutes."

While Bret was unconscious, Bigelow pulled him back into the ring, came down with a flying headbutt from the top rope and appeared to score the pin. But then a second referee rushed down the aisle to inform the first official of Luna's role. To Bam Bam's dismay, the match was restarted—and Hart won the prestigious *King of the Ring* crown with a victory roll.

Sadly, Bret had little time to rejoice. Jerry "The King" Lawler



rushed the winner, claiming to be the real king of the World Wrestling Federation. Hit Man was attacked with his crown, a scepter and even the special throne designed for the King of the Ring.

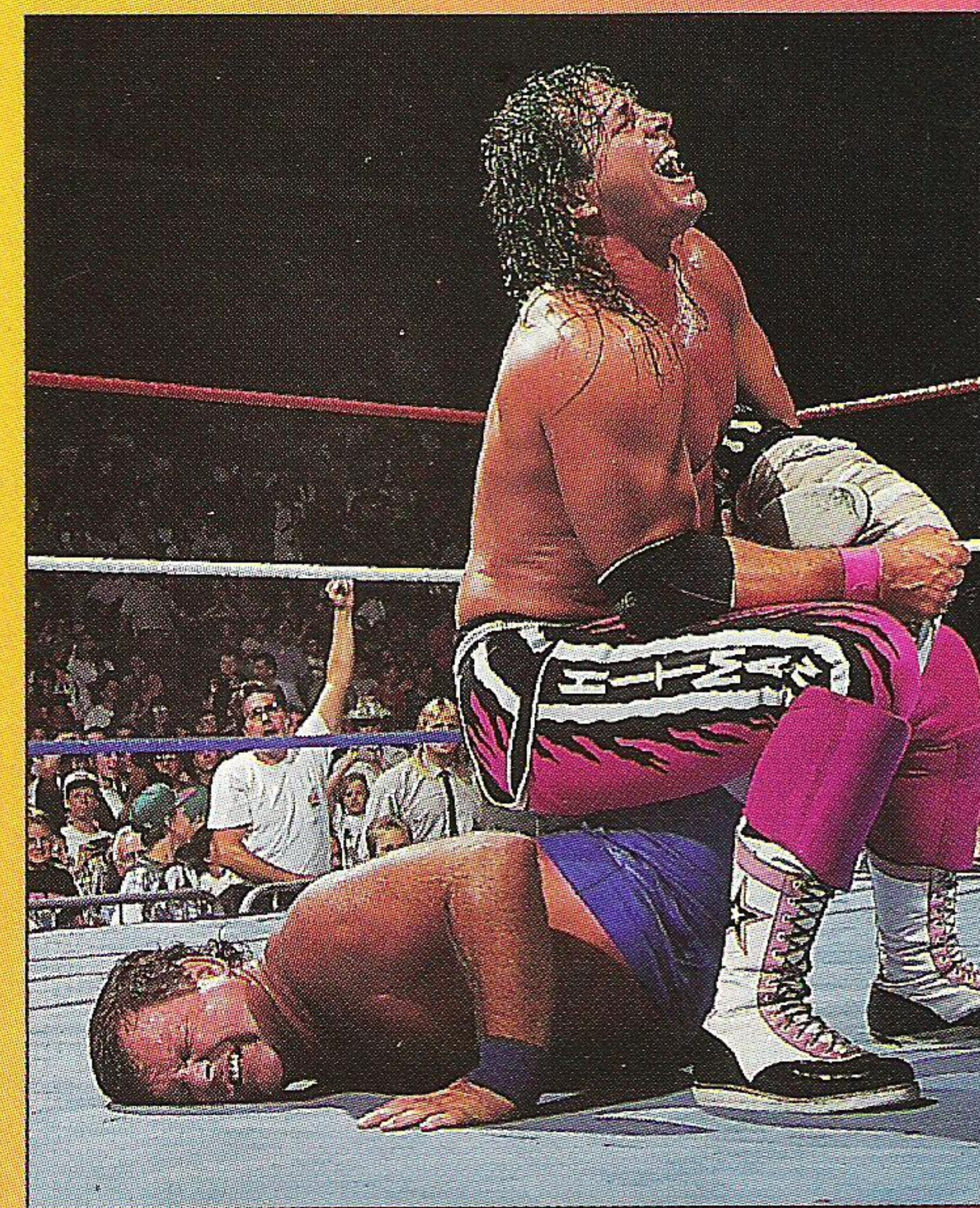
Even worse, Lawler started a campaign against not just Bret but the entire Hart family. He tormented Hit Man's parents, Stu and Helen, on *Monday Night Raw* and heaped insults on Bret's younger brother the Rocket Owen Hart.

"I guess he was looking for my Achilles' heel," says the Hit Man. "And when he went after my family, he found it."

At last year's *SummerSlam*, Bret was scheduled to mix it up with Lawler, while Hart brothers Owen and Bruce looked on from the front row. But Lawler attempted to duck the contest by coming to ringside on crutches. He dispatched Doink the Clown as a substitute to wrestle Hart, and Hit Man handled him with ease. When Lawler jumped into the ring in the middle of the match and smashed Bret with a crutch, World Wrestling Federation President Jack Tunney ruled that the self-proclaimed king was not injured—and ordered him to face Hart then and there or face suspension.

"I was furious," Bret says. "Lawler had been mocking my brothers at

ringside the whole time, and now he was trying to make a fool out of me. Honestly, this was one of the few times in my career where hurting my opponent was more important than winning."

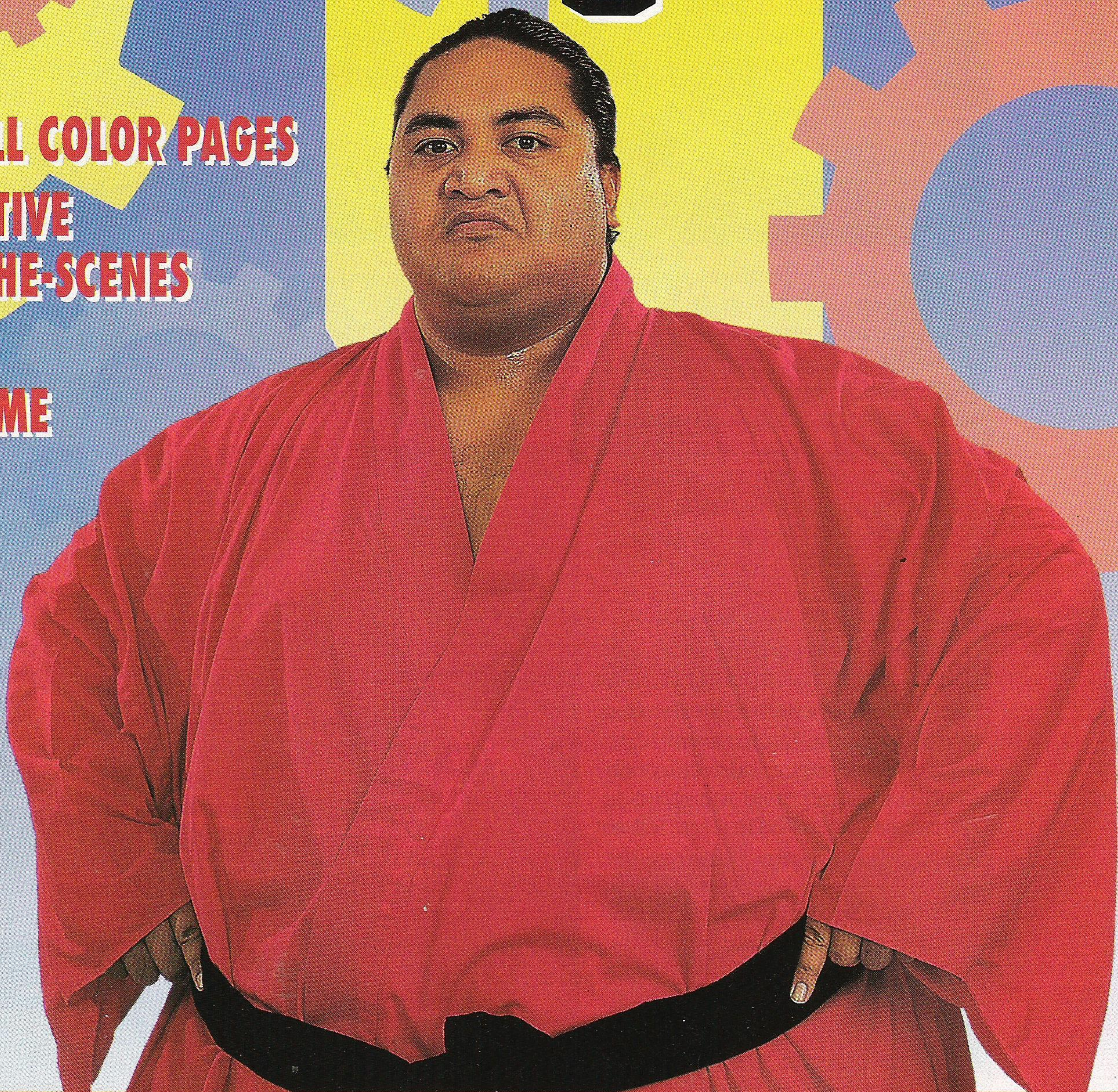
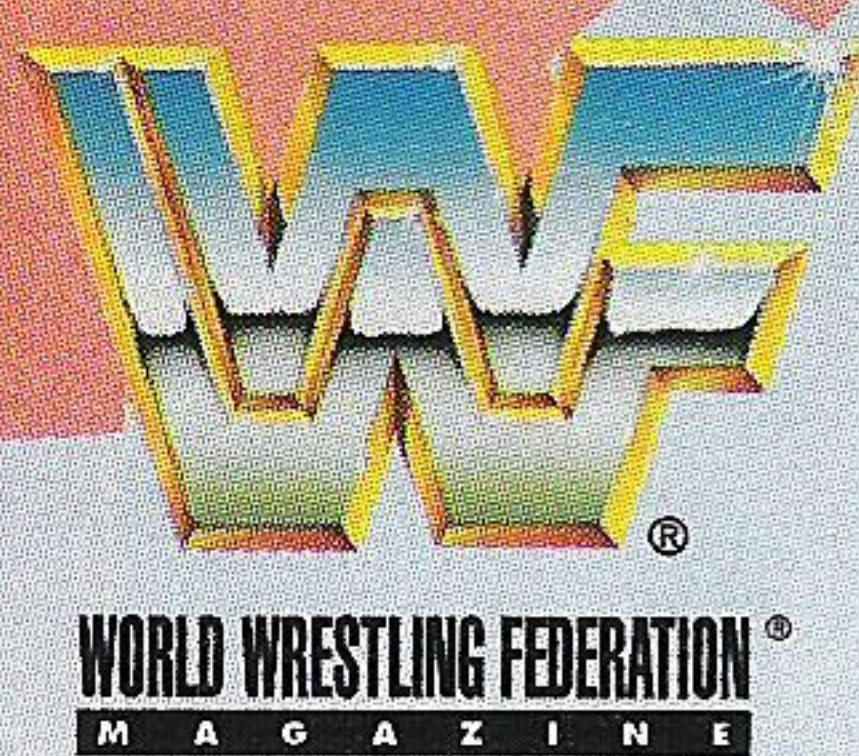


Hart got his wish, catching Lawler in the Sharpshooter and refusing to release the hold even after Owen and Bruce told their brother to ease off. Officials who also jumped in to prevent the impending massacre had no choice but to disqualify the Hit Man—who pledged to harm Lawler again at a later date.

The former champion was scheduled to team with Owen, Bruce and

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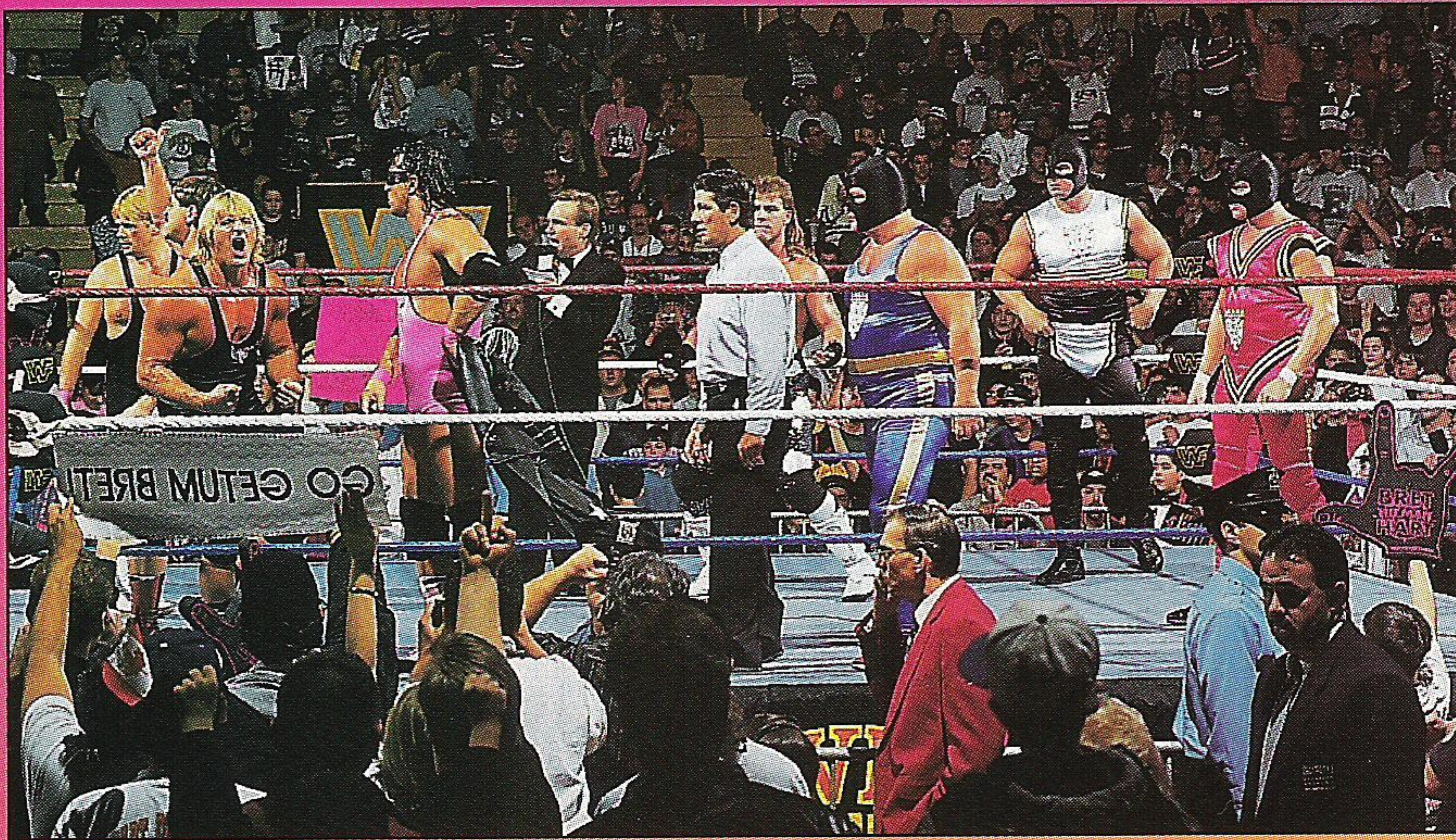
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another brother, Keith, at the *Survivor Series*, against a team headed by Lawler and three masked knights. At the last moment, however, Lawler had to cancel out for personal reasons. Shawn Michaels stepped in as a replacement, and—with father Stu in their corner—the Harts looked forward to a memorable night.

"This wasn't just going to be a victory for me," Bret recalls. "This was going to be a victory for the entire Hart family."

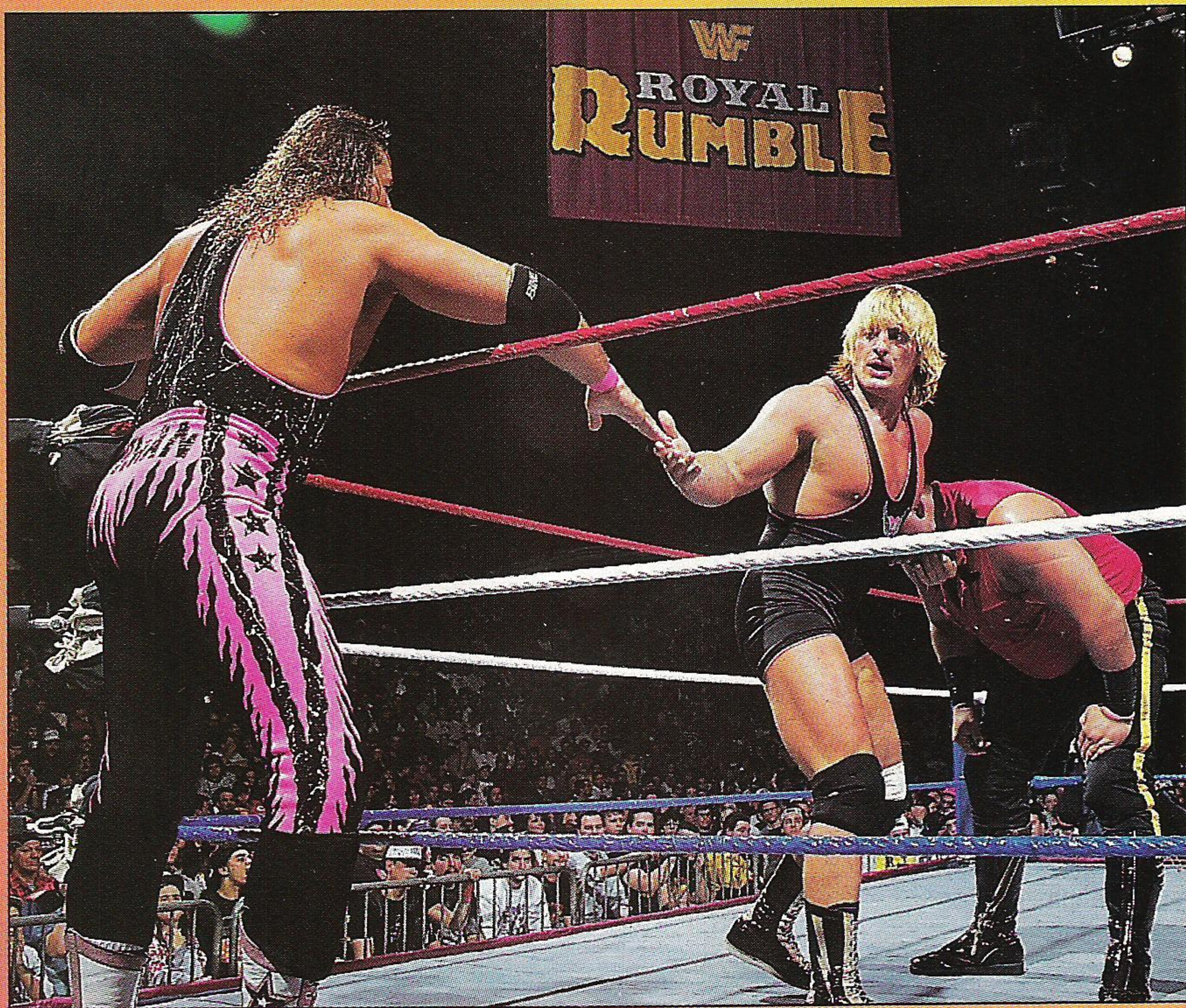
What occurred instead threatened to break up the family indefinitely. While Owen was in the ring with Shawn, the Rocket went to rebound off the ropes and accidentally crashed into Bret, who was standing on the ring apron. Hit Man fell to the arena floor, crashing into the barricade on the way down. Owen seemed to believe that Bret had collided with him on purpose and began berating his older brother. That diversion allowed Shawn to sneak up behind Owen and school-boy him for the pin.

The ramifications of the episode rocked the Hart family for weeks. All of Owen's resentments about "living in Bret's shadow" came out. Bret always got all the attention, the younger brother insisted, while the Rocket was forced to stand by and watch. As a means of reversing this trend, Owen demanded a match with the Hit Man.

Bret refused. "I never back down from any man," he said. "But family comes first, and I'm not going to go to the ring and fight my brother."

As a peace offering, Bret decided

to combine talents with his resentful sibling. The Hit Man proposed that the two would team up on the undercard of the 1994 *Royal Rumble* in an effort to wrest the Tag Team Title from the Quebecers.



"Owen agreed," Bret says, "and I thought that was that. Things seemed to have gotten better between us. I figured we'd just had a misunderstanding, and it was time to move on."

But Owen was still harboring a lifetime of rancor. As the Quebecers, Jacques and Pierre, twisted and pounded Hit Man's leg, the Rocket appeared to be more angry at his brother than concerned for his safety. Desperate to win the Tag Team Title, Owen begged Bret to tag out, but Hit

Man couldn't. Finally, the referee declared that Bret could no longer continue and called for the bell.

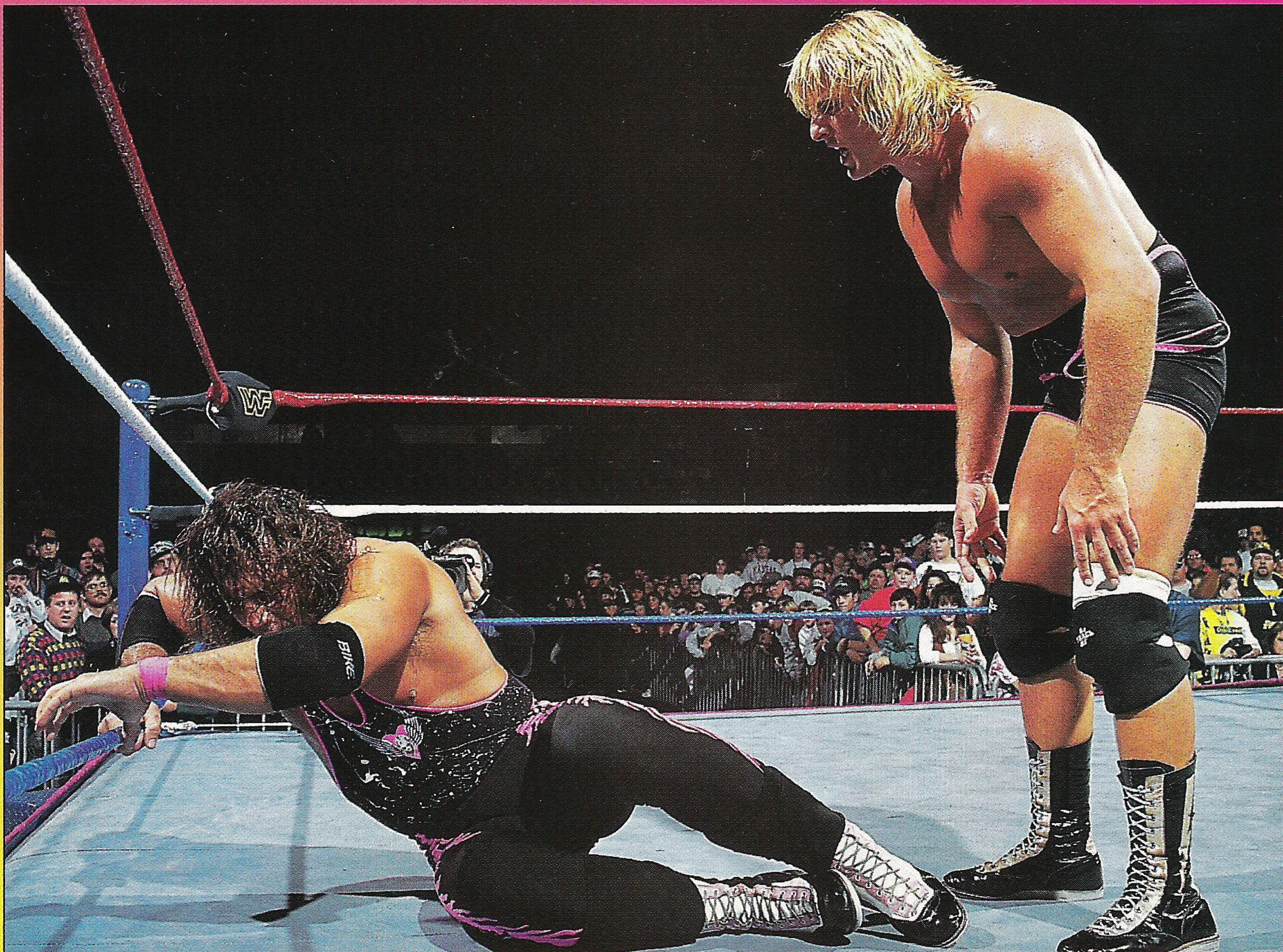
The Quebecers had retained their belts, and the Rocket was furious about missing out on this opportunity to snare the title. Rather than tending to Bret's aching leg, Owen kicked it, leaving Hit Man agonizing in the ring. "All my life, it's been the same!" the Rocket yelled. "Bret's already been a Tag Team Champion, so he doesn't care! But what about me?! What have I ever got?! This was my chance to finally have a title around my waist, and Bret blew it just because he was too selfish to tag out!"

Hit Man didn't even bother to respond. He was scheduled to participate in the *Royal Rumble* later in the evening and intended to make good on his commitment. In the dressing

room, doctors advised him that he should go home and nurse his leg. But Bret refused.

"That's not the way I was raised," he says. "My goal was to win the *Royal Rumble*, and I wasn't going to leave without at least trying."

Fans were shocked when Hart limped out to the ring for the dangerous 30-man variation of a battle royal. Relying purely on his inner spirit, he stayed in the elimination match until the bitter end, left alone with his old



rival Lex Luger and tumbling over the top rope with him.

World Wrestling Federation officials looked at one another in bewilderment. Who won? The answer was crucial because the victor had been guaranteed a *WrestleMania X* title shot against World Wrestling Federation Champion Yokozuna.

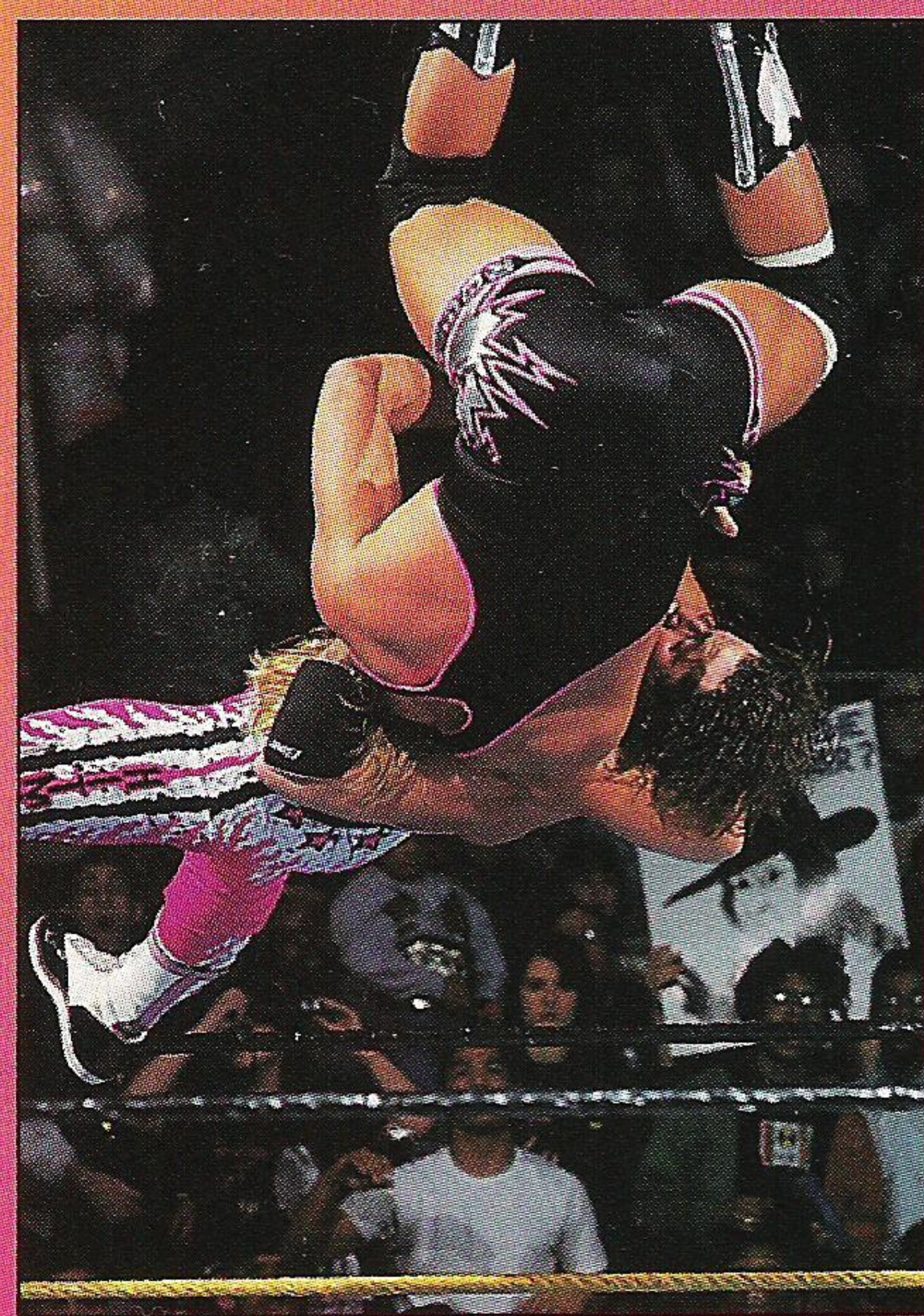
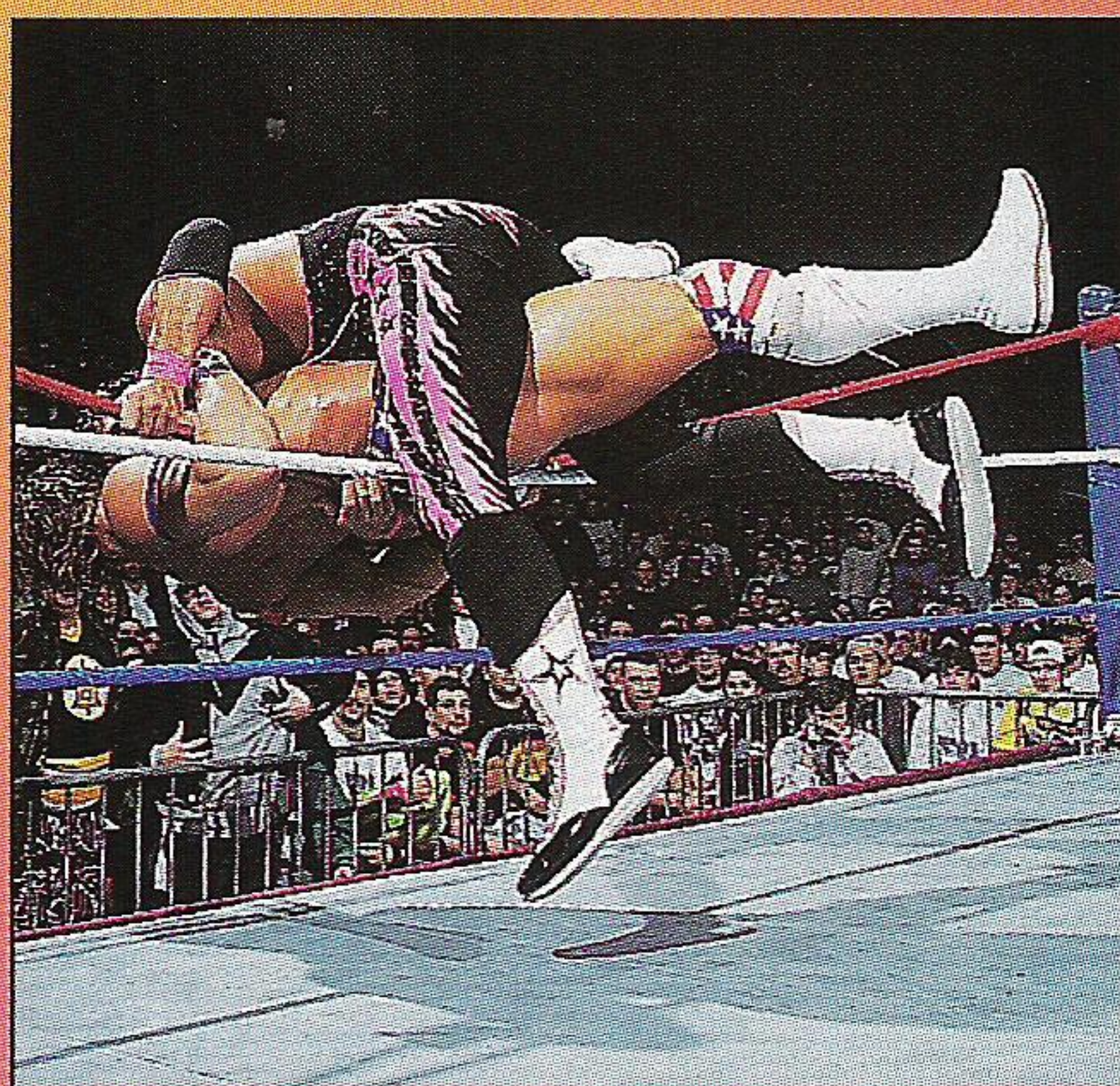
After much deliberation, Federation President Jack Tunney determined that both Luger and Hart had landed on the arena floor at the same time. Therefore, both men were winners. Each would get a chance to wrestle for the belt at *WrestleMania X*. Bret would have to wrestle his brother, then—win or lose—face the winner of the championship clash in the main event.

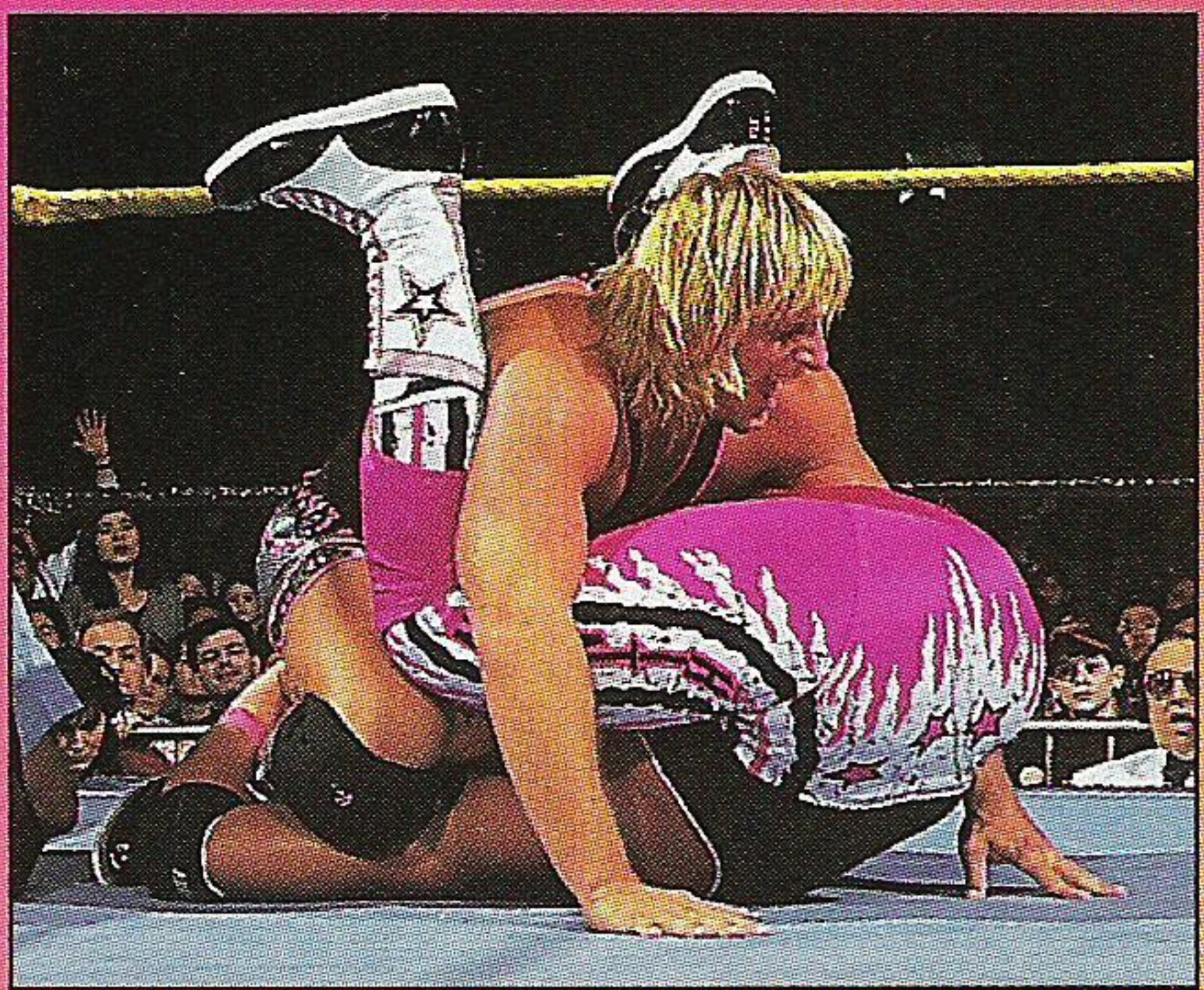
"My feelings about the whole day were mixed," Bret says. "After having the belt stolen from me at *WrestleMania IX*, I was looking forward to

the chance to finally take back the gold. But my heart was never really into wrestling my brother and upsetting my family like that."

That didn't prevent Hit Man from engaging in a textbook match with the Rocket in the opening contest of *WrestleMania X*. Early on, Owen trapped his sibling in the figure-four leglock, but Bret managed to shift his weight and reverse the hold. Still, the

younger Hart proved that he was made from the same durable material as his fabled brother. When Hit Man delivered a bone-jarring superplex from the top rope, the Rocket sur-





vived and continued battling. As Bret attempted a victory roll, Owen slowed his brother's momentum and fell on top of him for a startling win.

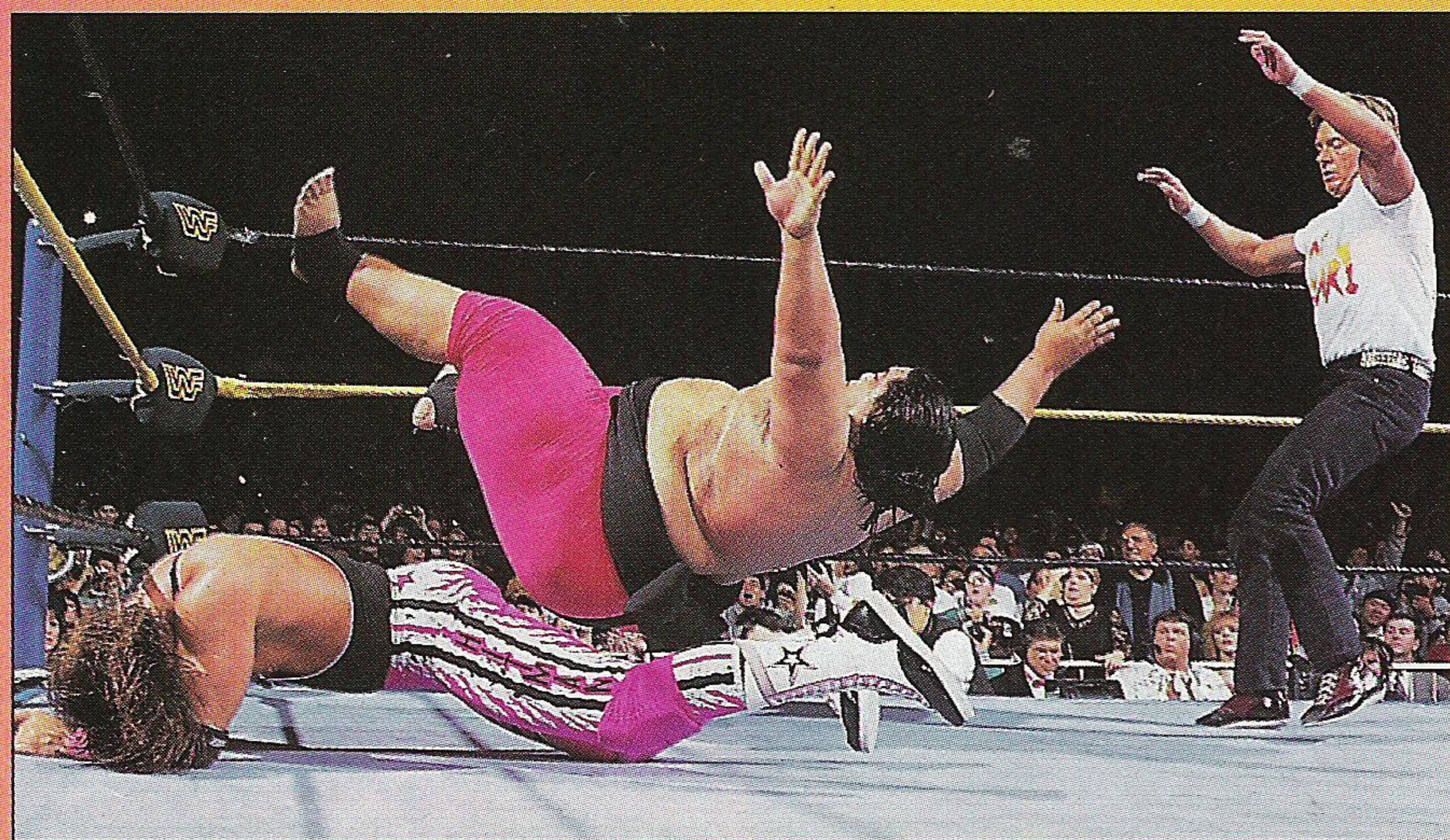
"A lot of people said I lost because of the peculiar circumstances, that I

under a Yokozuna clothesline and came back with a volley of hard fists.

Even after Yokozuna surged again, Bret would not contemplate surrender. "I'd already been humiliated by Yokozuna once," Hit Man says. "He wasn't going to get the same satisfaction another time."

When Yokozuna charged at Hart, Hit Man picked up a leg and nailed the champion in the sternum. Then Hart got on the second rope and drove the beast of the sumo world into the mat with a bulldog headlock.

Dazed but far from beaten, Yokozuna lumbered back at Hit Man. He first caught him in a belly-to-belly suplex,



couldn't muster up the enthusiasm to take down my brother," Hit Man recalls. "But I don't want to make excuses. Despite the emotions, I'll admit he was the better man in that match."

Hit Man still had another confrontation to think about that night. In a controversial decision, special referee Mr. Perfect disqualified Luger in his challenge to Yokozuna. That meant Yokozuna would defend the belt in the final match of the card—and Bret would have a chance to soundly defeat the mammoth who took his title exactly one year earlier.

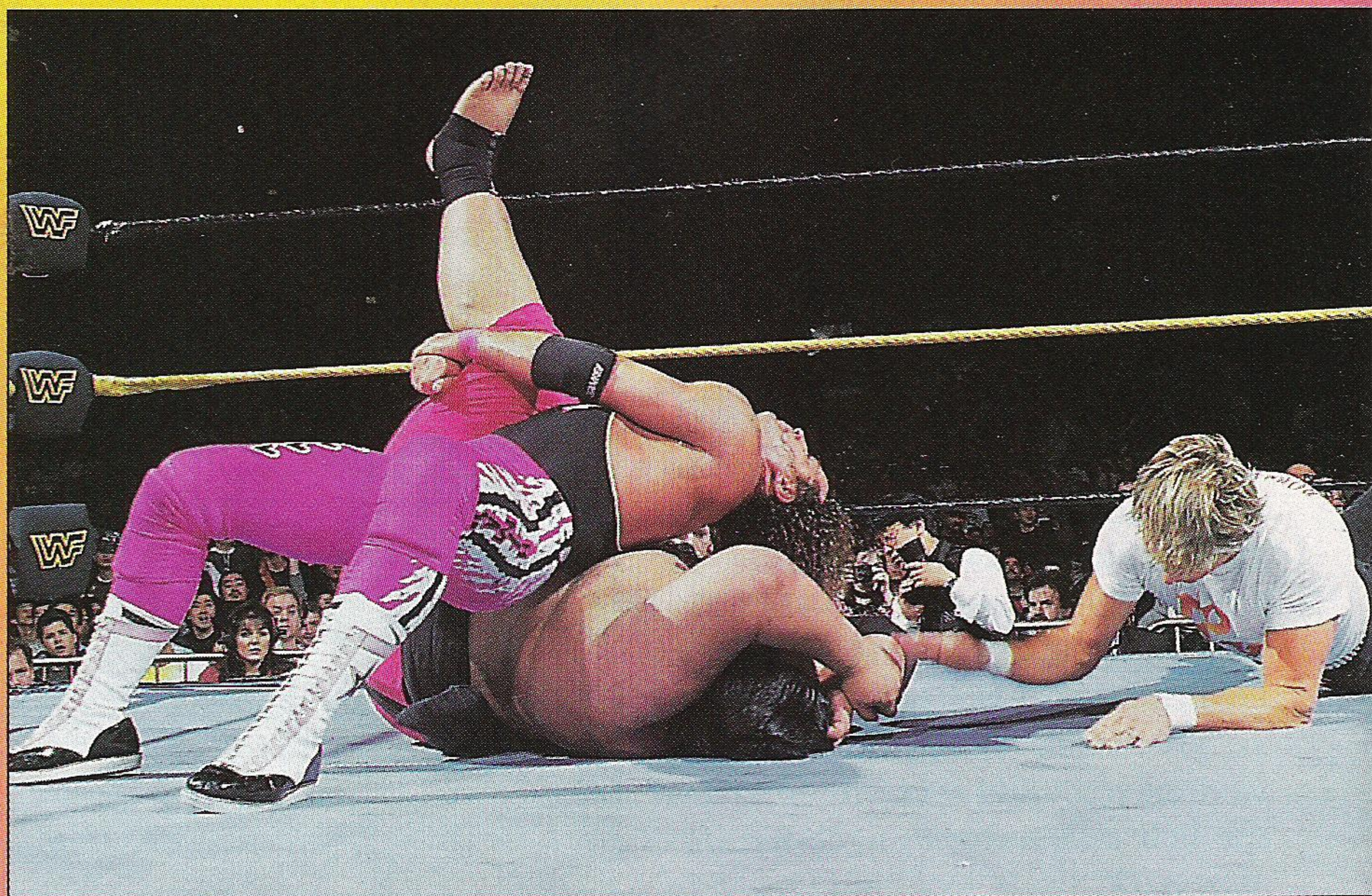
With World Wrestling Federation legend Rowdy Roddy Piper serving as referee, Yokozuna used his bulk to his advantage, pouncing on Hart with a blur of punches, chops and kicks. Thinking defensively, Hit Man narrowly missed decapitation by ducking

then dragged him to a corner, preparing him for the fatal Banzai Splash.

Yokozuna went up to the second rope, but the full effect of Bret's attack seemed to have gotten to him. He seemed unable to concentrate, dizzy. As he looked down to measure his foe, a tired Yokozuna slid off the ropes and crumbled to the canvas. "I saw him fall and knew it was now or never," Hart says. "My instincts took over, and the next thing I knew, I was the man on top, covering Yokozuna for the pin."

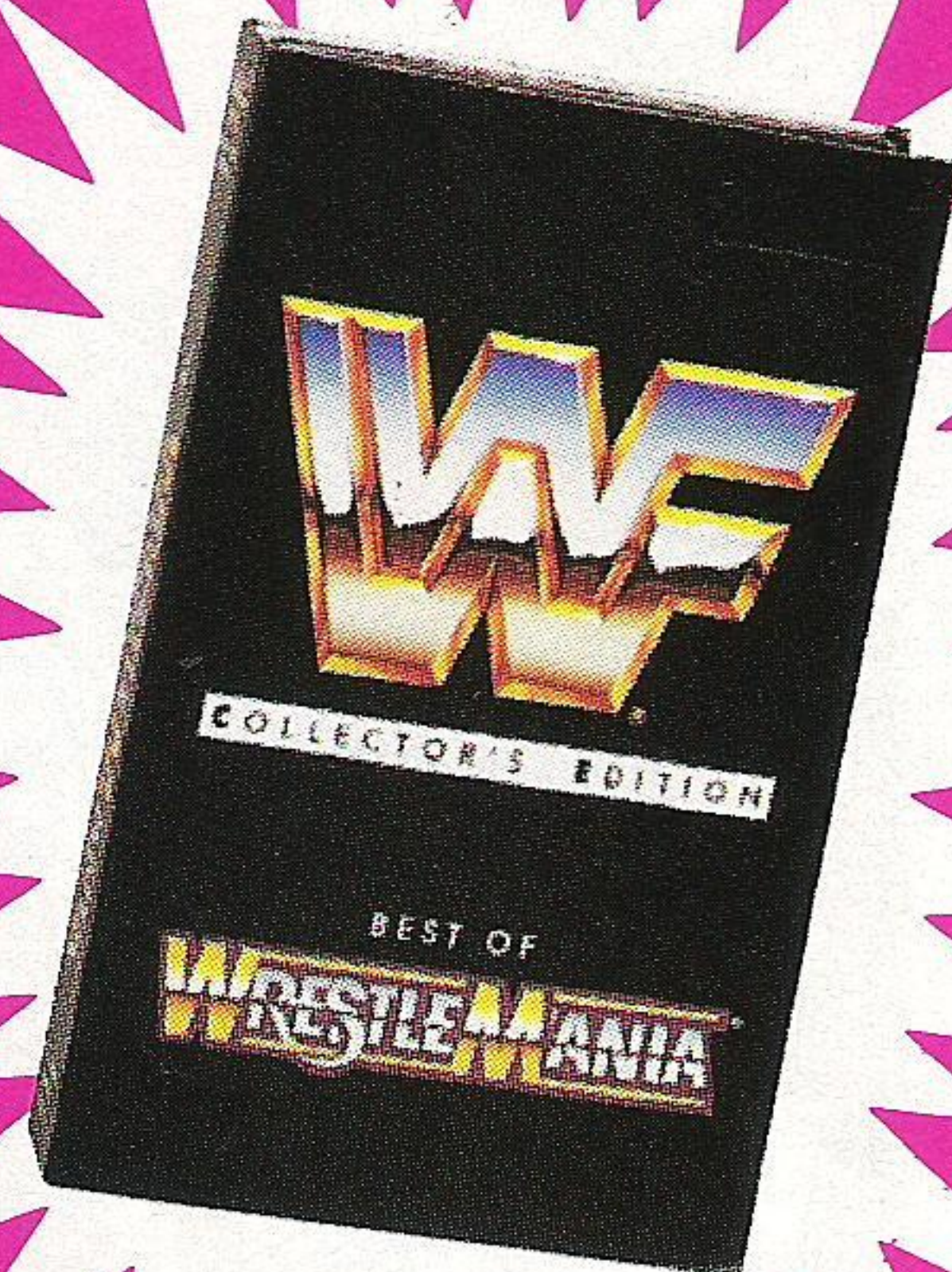
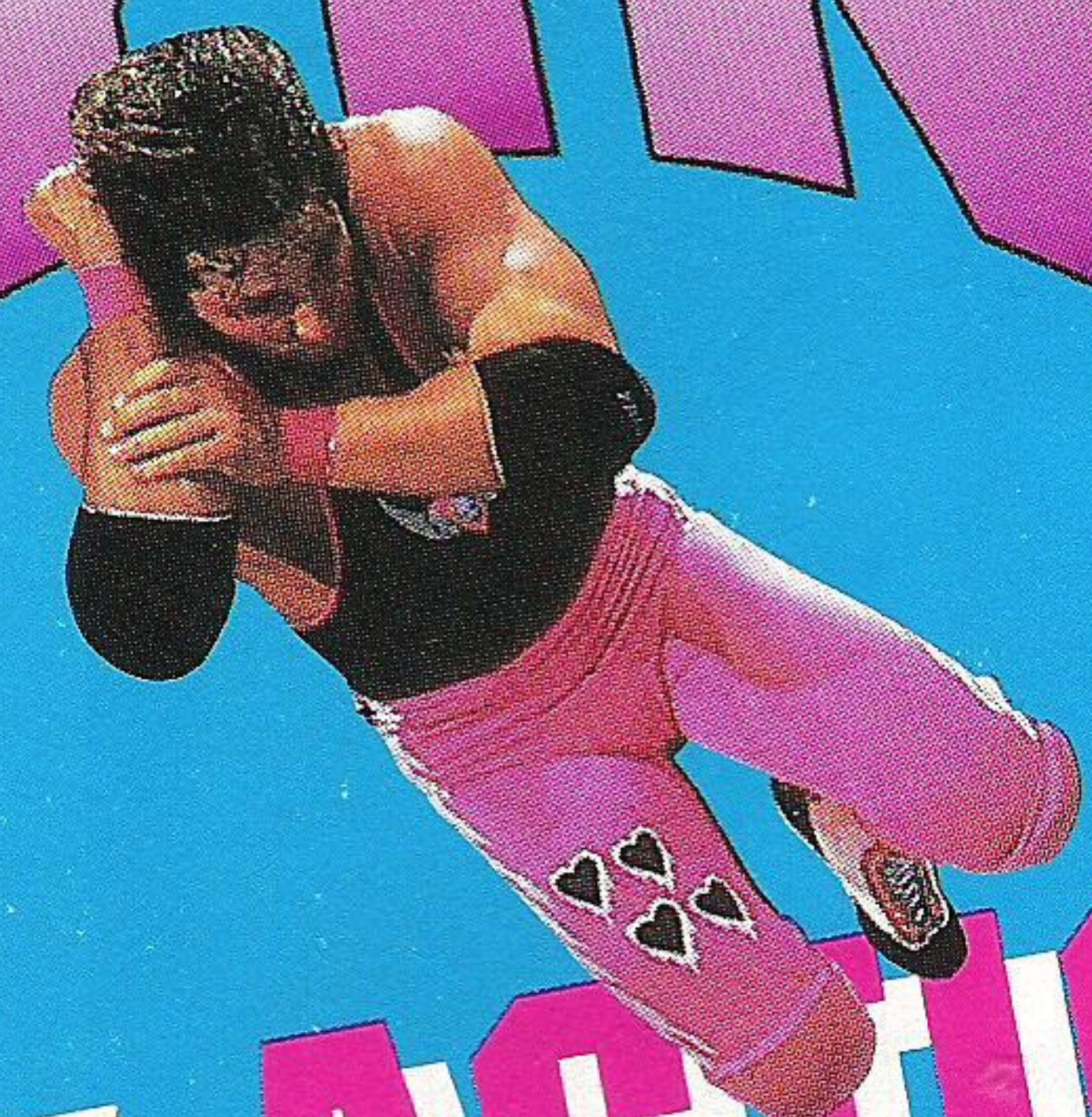
Once again, Bret "Hit Man" Hart was the World Wrestling Federation Champion. The fans at Madison Square Garden were on their feet, exulting. Hit Man's allies in the wrestling world raced down the aisle to congratulate him. But just outside the dressing room area, Owen Hart appeared, hands on hips, shaking his head in anger.

"Owen and I were raised the same way," Bret says. "We know the law of the dungeon. If he wants to step to the plate and have a shot at my belt, he's welcome to it. But he's going to be very disappointed. The World Wrestling Federation Title has always been my destiny. I've paid my dues, and I've won the glory. And—I don't care if it's Yokozuna, Bam Bam Bigelow, Shawn Michaels or my very own brother—nobody's going to take that away from me ever again." **WF**



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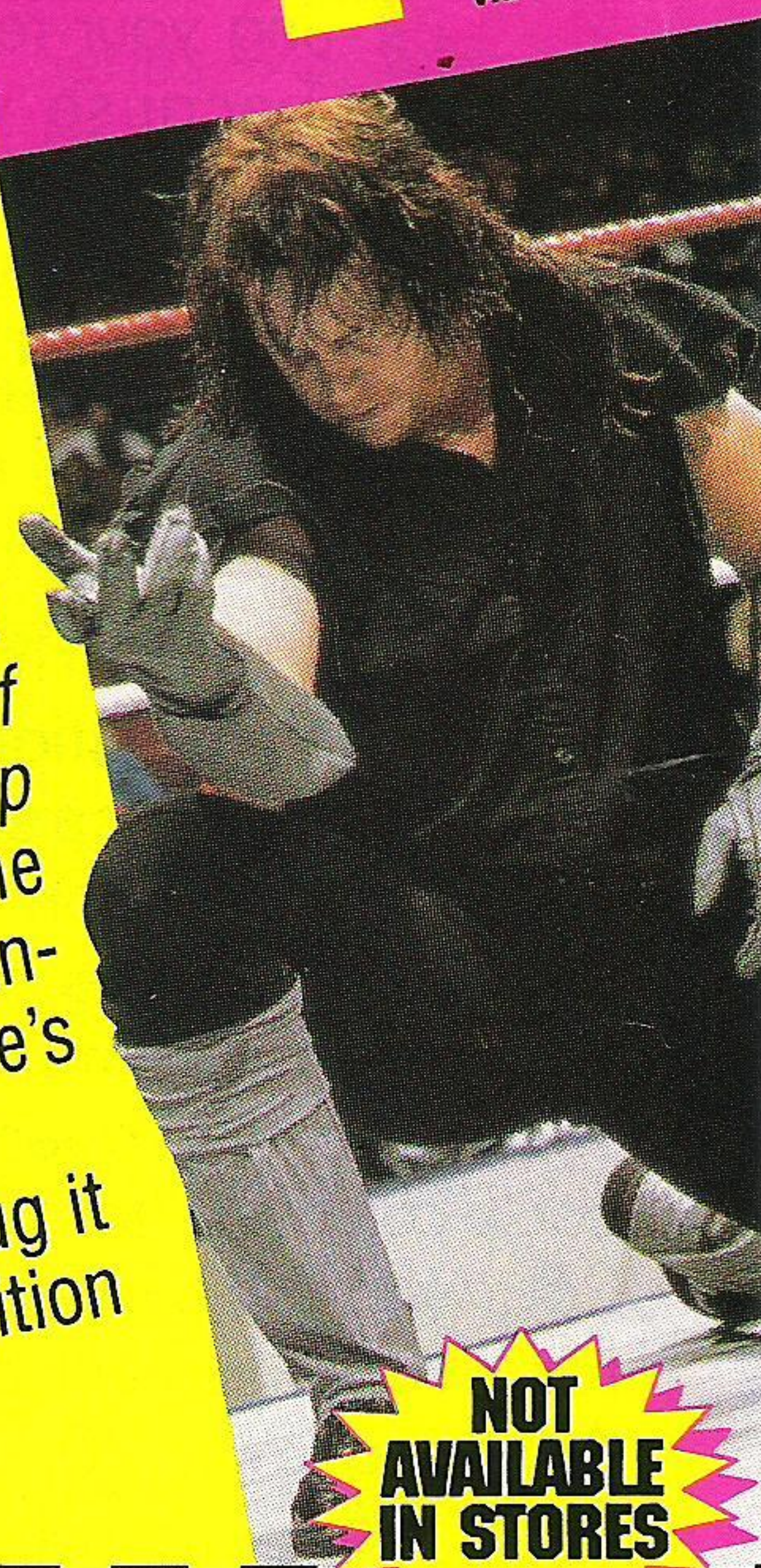
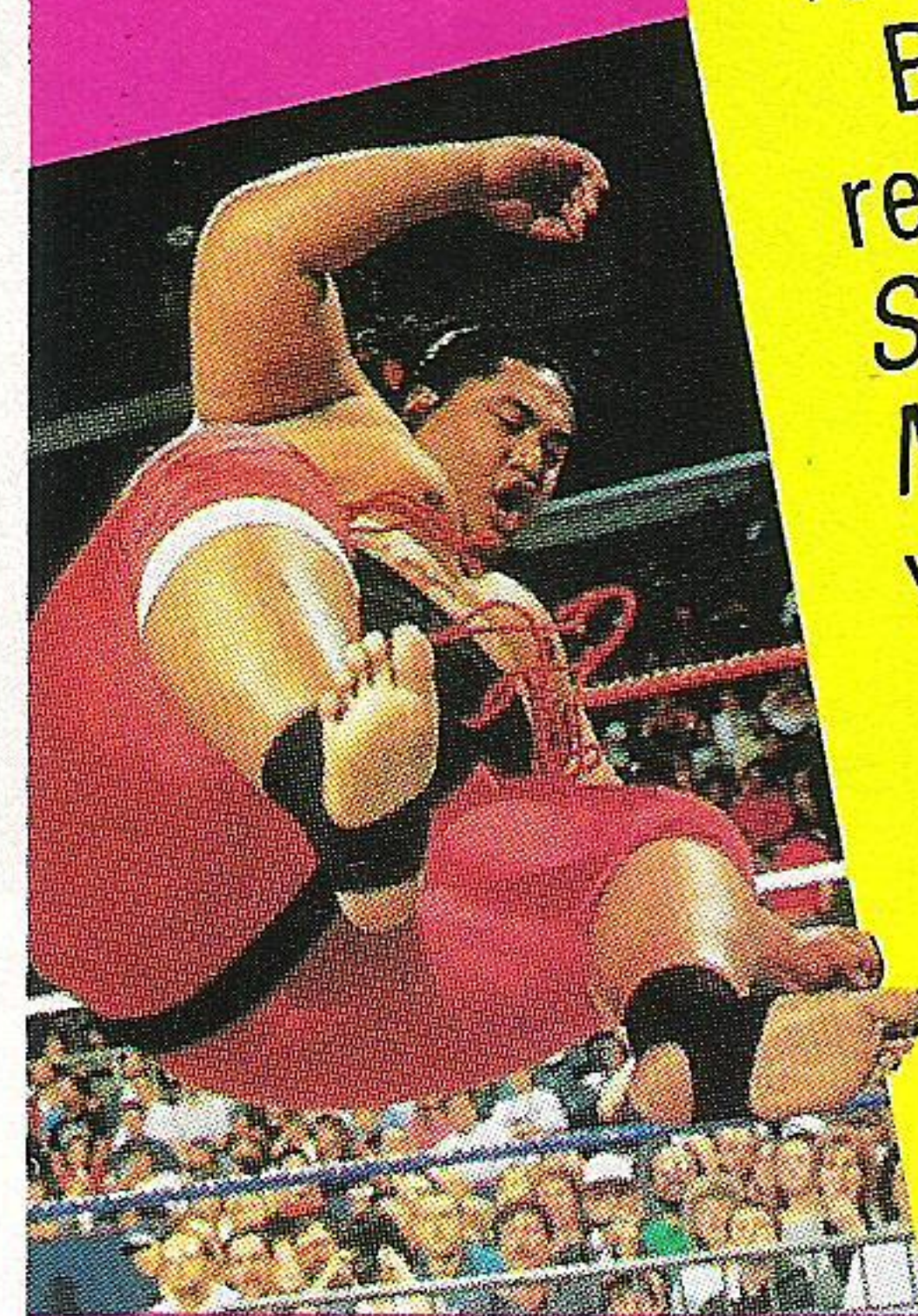
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SPOTLIGHT

TRIVIA QUIZ

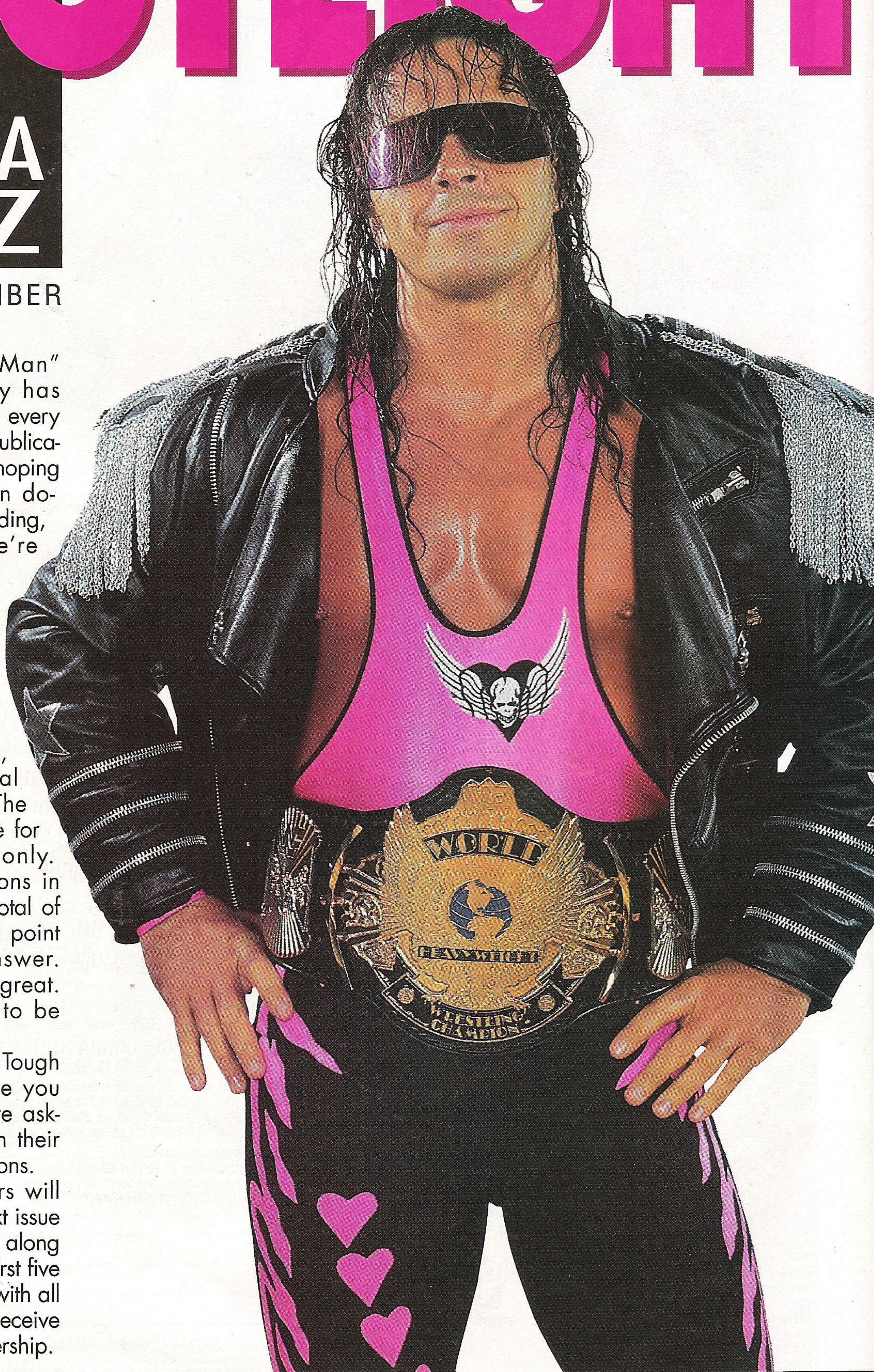
BY LARRY HUMBER

Bret "Hit Man" Hart's story has been told in every Federation publication. Here's hoping you've been doing your reading, because we're about to test you with our Trivia Quiz.

There are five categories of questions, followed by a special Tough Stuff section. The first five categories are for your entertainment only. There are five questions in each category, for a total of 25. Award yourself a point for every correct answer. Anything over 20 is great. Over 15 is nothing to be ashamed of.

The final category, Tough Stuff, will really make you think. That's why we're asking readers to send in their answers to those questions.

The correct answers will be published in the next issue of *Wrestling Spotlight*, along with the names of the first five readers who come up with all the answers. They will receive a free Fan Club membership.



ROOTS

- 1 Bret's dad, Stu, was a champion athlete. He wrestled and played what sport professionally?
- 2 Bret's mom, Helen, was the daughter of what flamboyant U.S. Olympian?
- 3 How did they spend their honeymoon?
- 4 Where does the Hart clan still reside?
- 5 What is Stu's Dungeon?

THE FIRST JEWEL

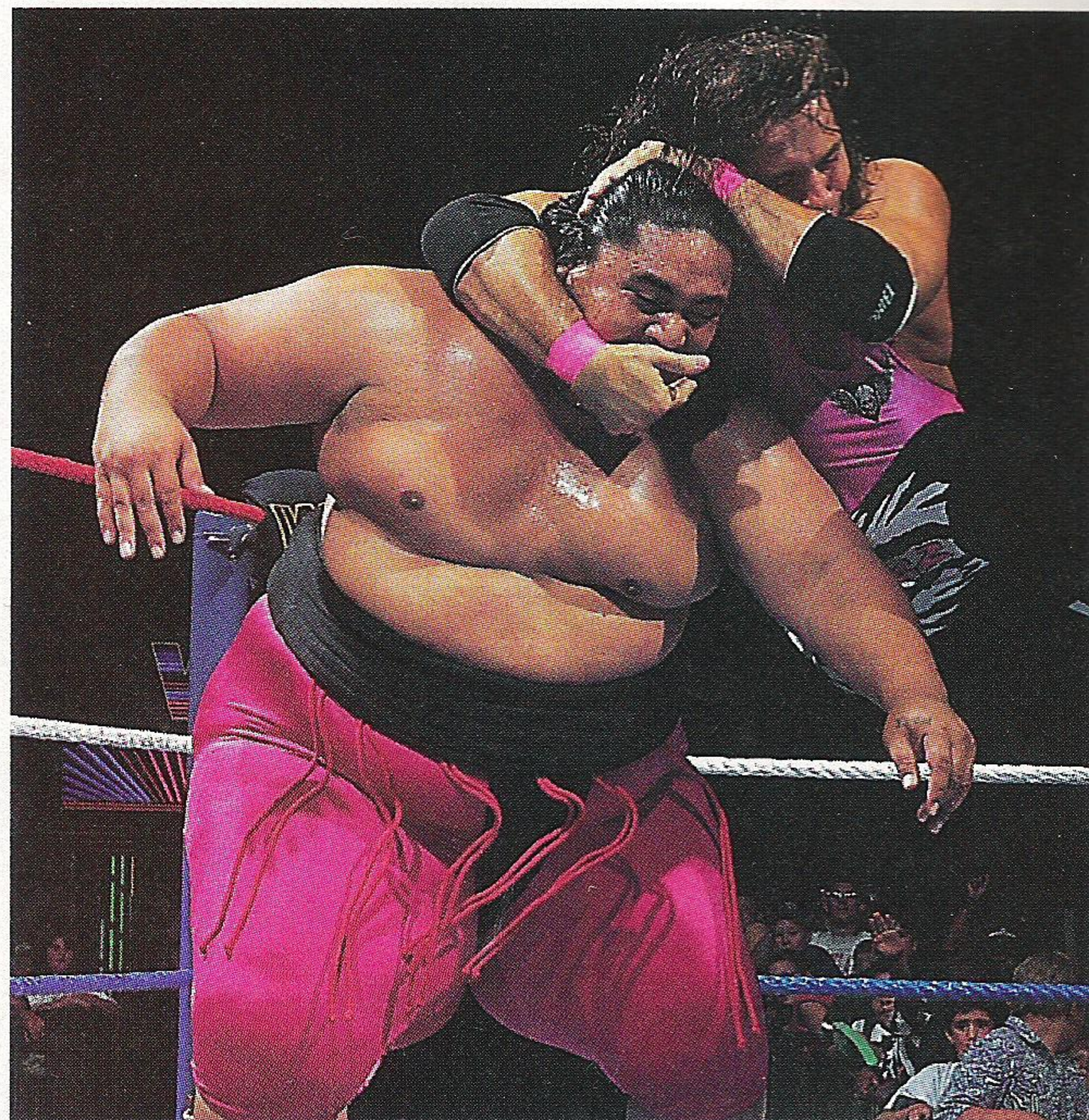
- 6 Bret won his first title while he was a member of the Hart Foundation. Whom did the Harts defeat to capture the Tag Team Championship?
- 7 They had a little help from the referee, though. He subsequently joined them for a spell. Do you remember who that was?
- 8 Whom did they beat for their second title?
- 9 The team's favorite finisher was dubbed the Hart Attack. How did it involve Bret?
- 10 Bret decided to go his own way after the Harts lost to the Nasty Boys at what *WrestleMania*?

THE REMAINING JEWELS

- 11 Bret had immediate success as a singles competitor, as he quickly grabbed the Intercontinental Title. Whom did he defeat (a man with few flaws) for this title?
- 12 Hart's second Intercontinental Title came at the expense of a longtime family friend—he would later lend Bret a hand at *WrestleMania X*. Can you tell us who that was?
- 13 Next for Bret was a date with Ric Flair for the World Wrestling Federation Championship. Flair wasn't about to hand it to him, though. How did Hart finally finish him off?
- 14 By beating Flair, the Hit Man became the first Canadian to take the Federation's top prize. Is that true or false?
- 15 The Hit Man also earned another distinction. What was that?

A FIGHTING CHAMPION

- 16 Bret didn't rest on his laurels. He defended the Federation Championship at the 1992 *Survivor Series*, where he took on the reigning Intercontinental champion. Who was that?
- 17 At the 1993 *Royal Rumble*, he got the better of a future Intercontinental champ. Who was that?
- 18 Things didn't go well for Hart at *WrestleMania IX*, though. He lost his title to the monstrous Yokozuna. But the unsmiling alien had some help from Mr. Fuji. How did he interfere?
- 19 Bret had another excuse for losing his title. What was that?
- 20 Hart's first reign as Federation Champion lasted 125, 150 or 175 days?



RECENT HAPPENINGS

- 21 Bret was back on top again soon after. He was pronounced King of the Ring after beating which big man in the tournament finals?
- 22 Then it was on to *Survivor Series '93*, where he was joined by three of his brothers. Who were the other Harts?
- 23 Despite some differences between them, Bret and his brother Owen teamed up at the 1994 *Royal Rumble*, where they took on the Quebecers. When they lost, Owen blamed Bret. Why?
- 24 Bret had another engagement at that *Royal Rumble*—the battle royal. Whom did he eliminate just before he and Lex Luger hit the floor?
- 25 Bret regained his Federation Championship at *WrestleMania X*, thanks in part to Yokozuna's clumsiness. Can you explain?

TOUGH STUFF (Please send answers to World Wrestling Federation Magazine, Post Office Box 3859, Stamford, CT 06902; postcards only, please.)

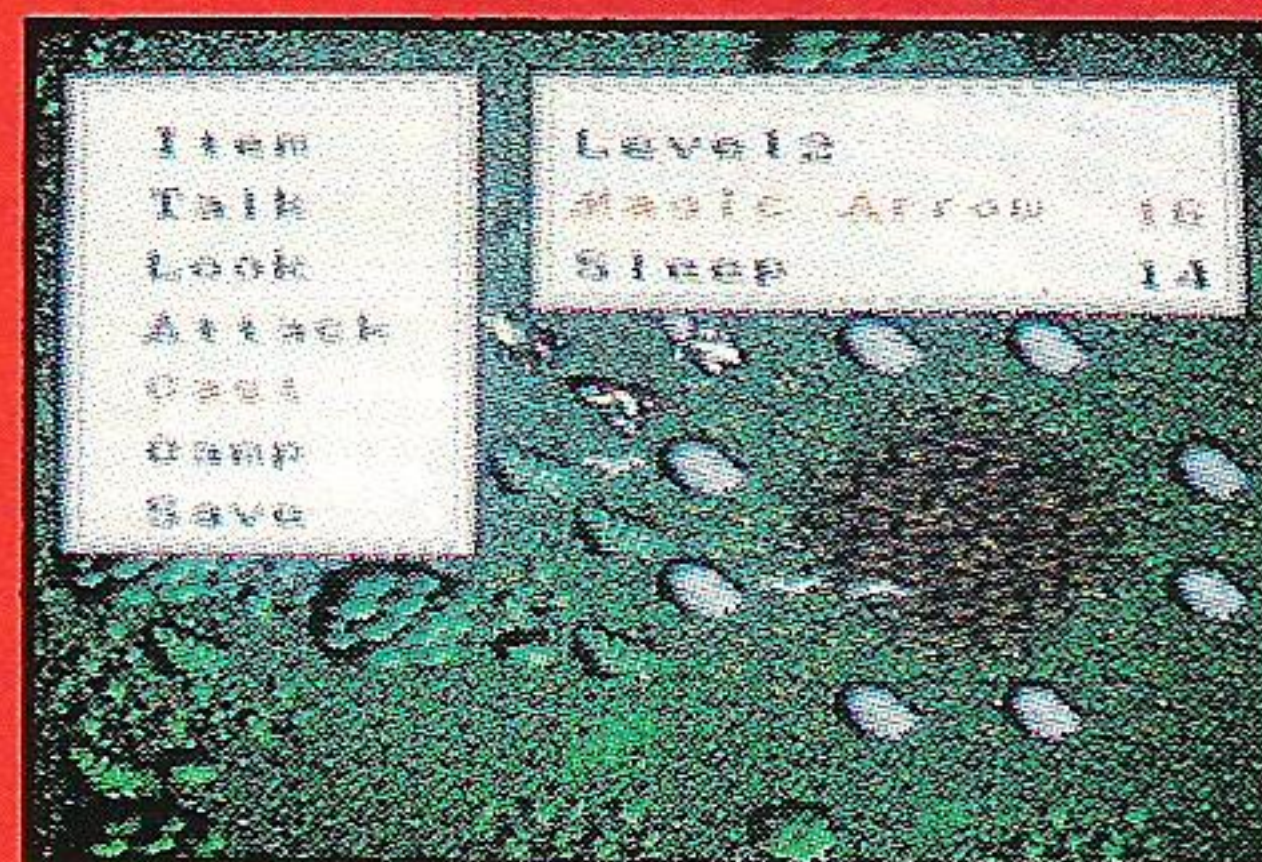
- a) This is Bret's fourth appearance in *Spotlight*. What other volume numbers focused on him?
- b) The Hit Man gave some thought to another profession before he decided to become a wrestler. What was that?
- c) When did Bret first appear alone on the cover of *World Wrestling Federation Magazine*?
- d) What was the first *WrestleMania* in which Bret participated? And in what event?
- e) To whom was Bret referring when he recently told *World Wrestling Federation Magazine*, "He's got as good a grasp on my wrestling style and timing as any man on the face of the earth. It would be hard to outthink him in the ring."

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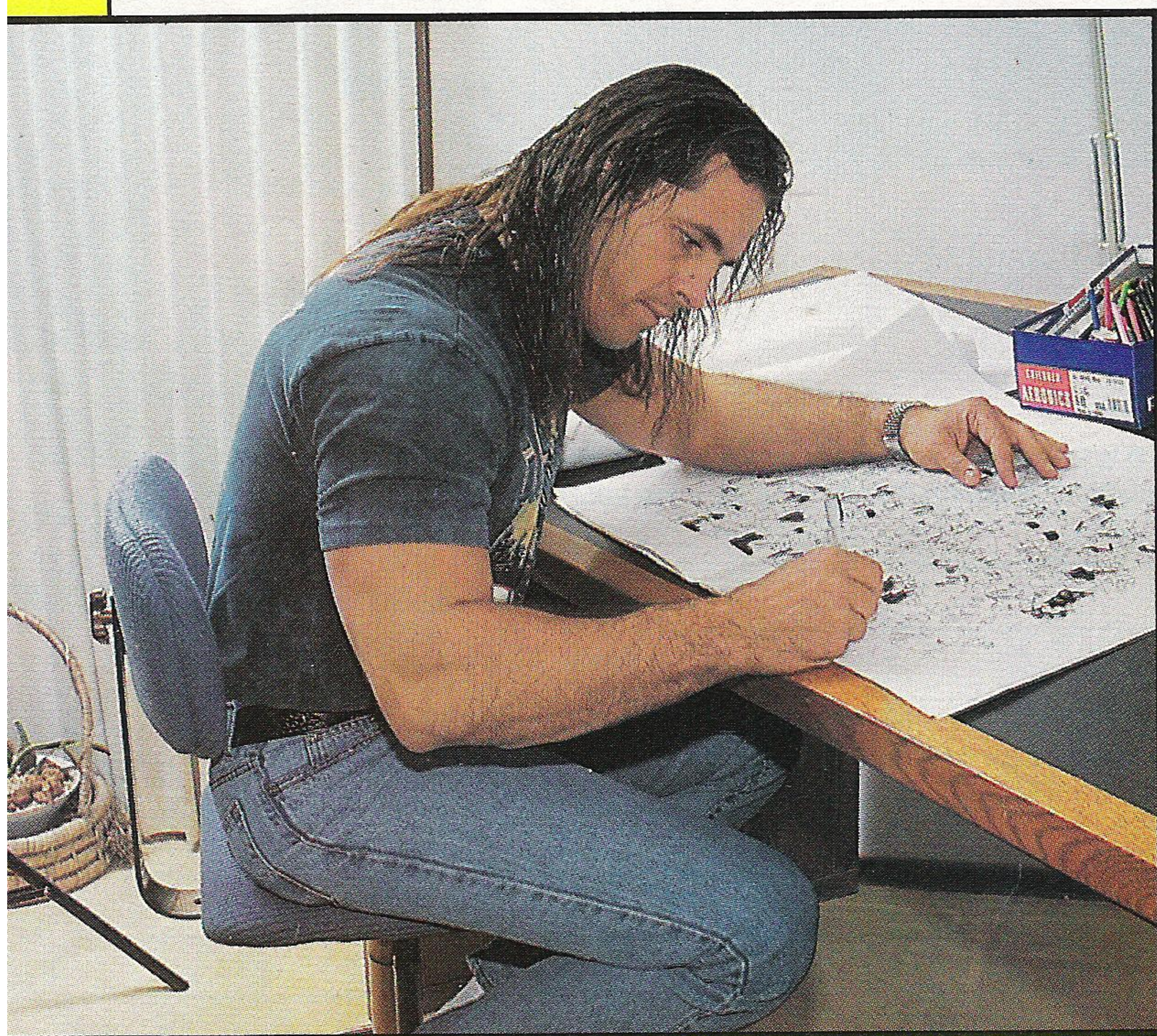
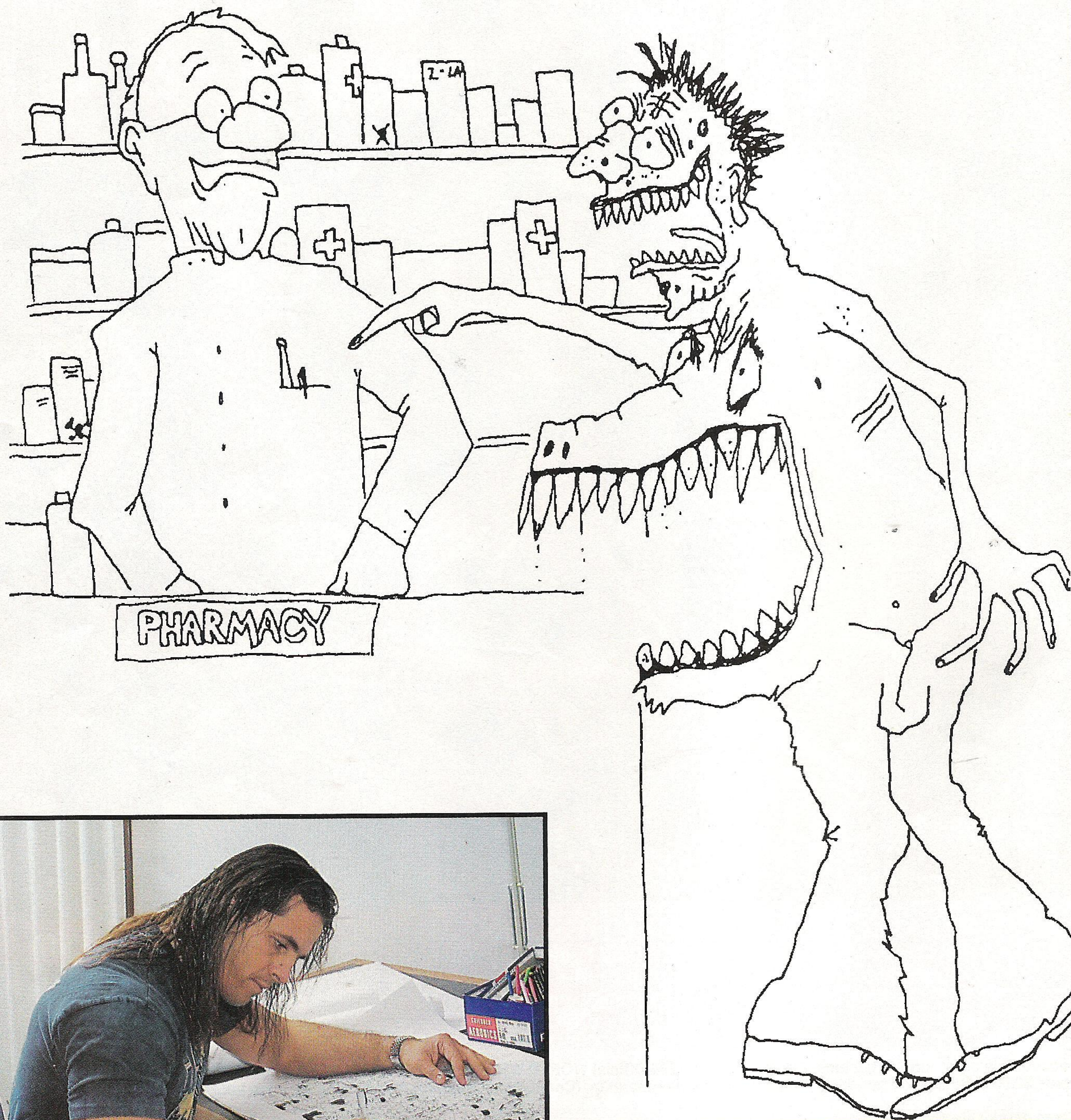
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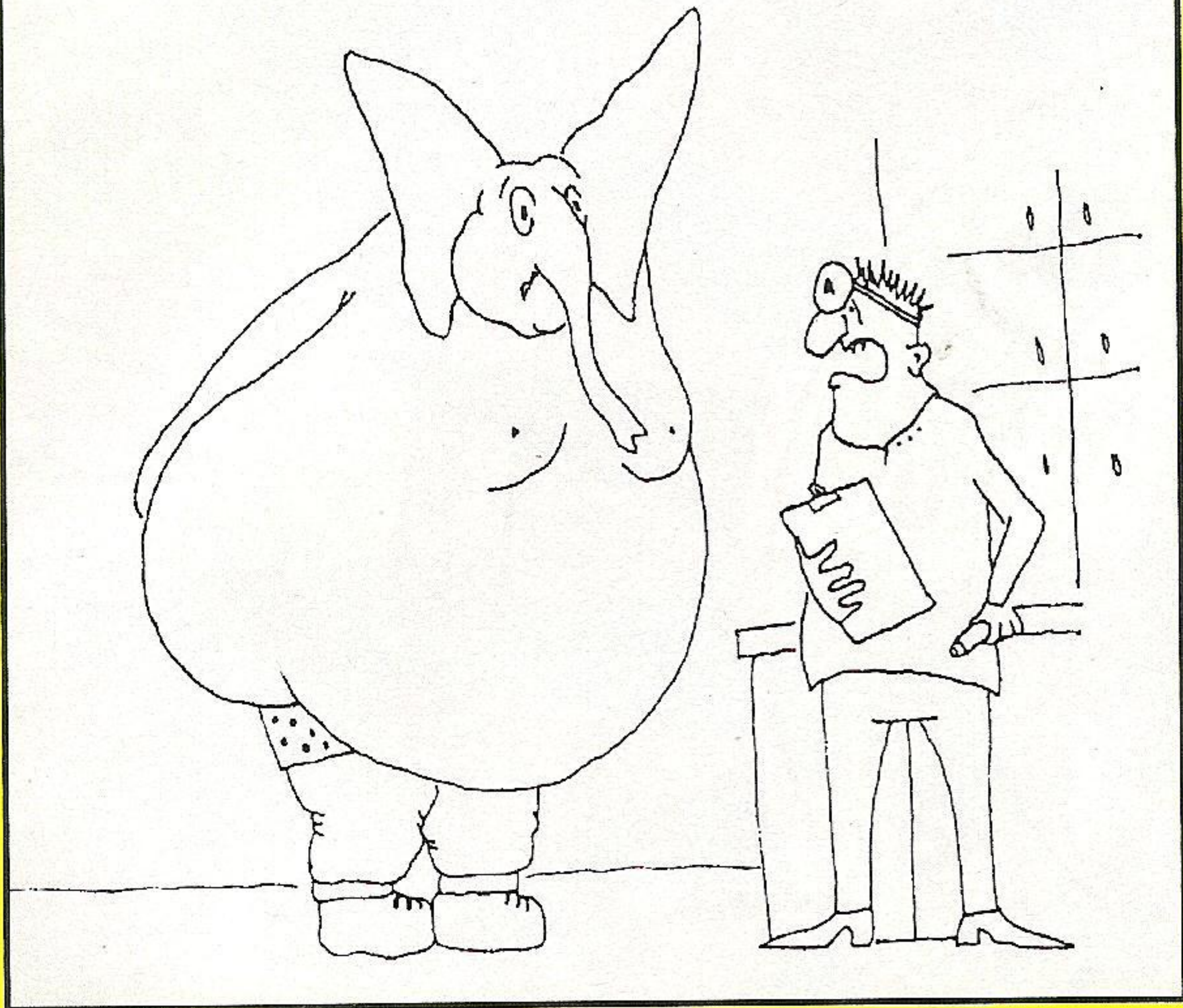
...MY MY SON! THAT'S SOME
UPSET STOMACH YOU'VE GOT THERE !!



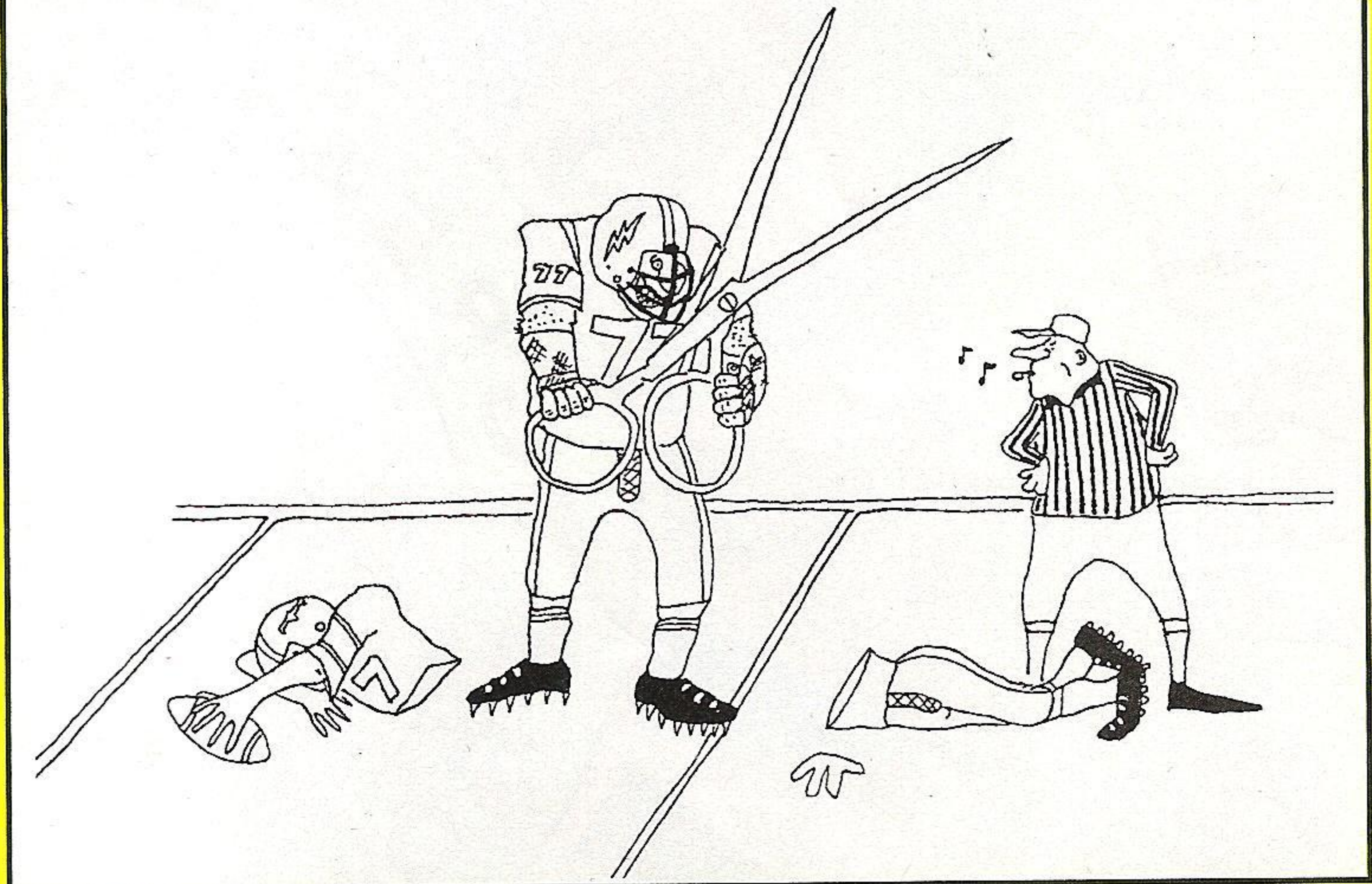
Bret "Hit Man" Hart, the World Wrestling Federation Champion, is known for many things. He is known as having Excellence of Execution in the squared circle. He is known as 1993's Federation Superstar of the Year. He is known as a wrestler with superior genetics and athletic ability. However, few people know that Bret is an exceptional artist. Here is a sampling of the Hit Man's work. For more on his artistic talent, pick up the latest issue of *World Wrestling Federation Magazine*, on sale June 14, which features exclusive cartoons that the champ drew himself!

the art of hart

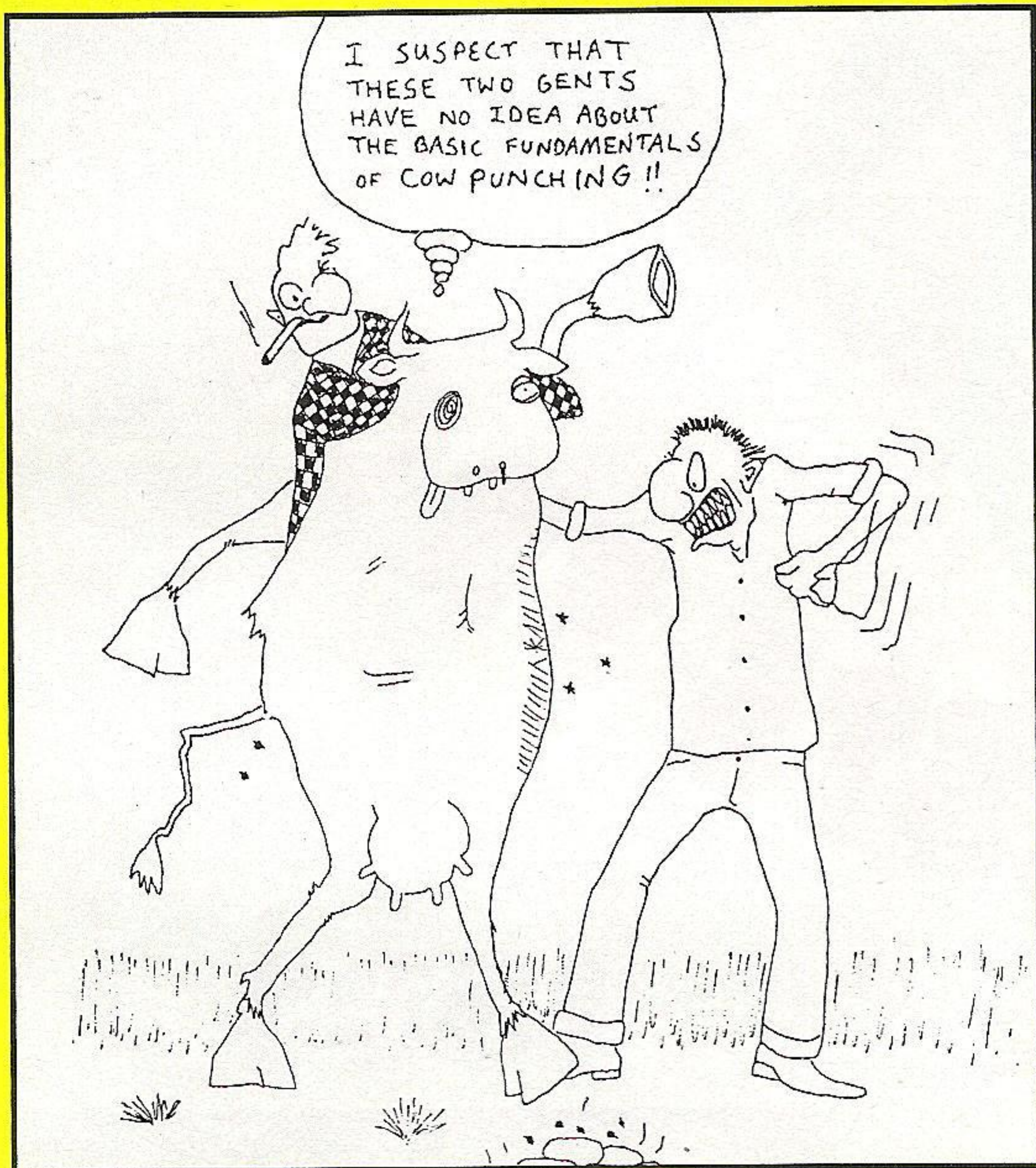
IT LOOKS LIKE A SURE CASE OF ELEPHATIASIS MR. HUMPHREY



IT LOOKS LIKE A FOR SURE CLIPPING CALL ON LISOWSKY



I SUSPECT THAT
THESE TWO GENTS
HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT
THE BASIC FUNDAMENTALS
OF COW PUNCHING !!



NO! NO! NO!
YOU IDIOT I
SAID FLOG
HIM !!



HEY! BUDDY YOU
SOLD ME A DARN
BUM STEER !!!



"THIS DOG POUND BUSINESS IS
STARTIN' TO REALLY
GET TO ME !"



BRET

COMMENTS

ON

BLASTS

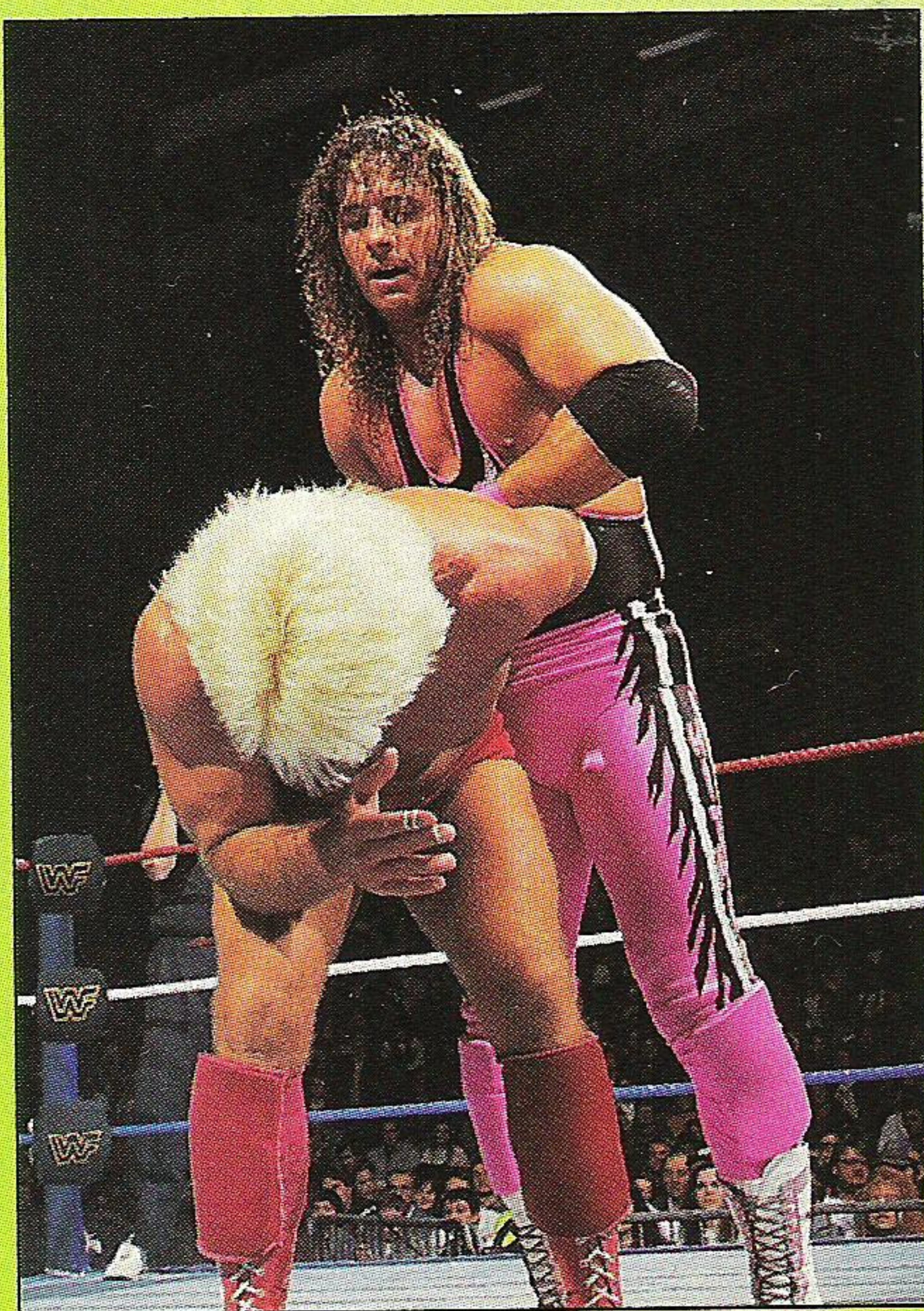
FROM

THE PAST

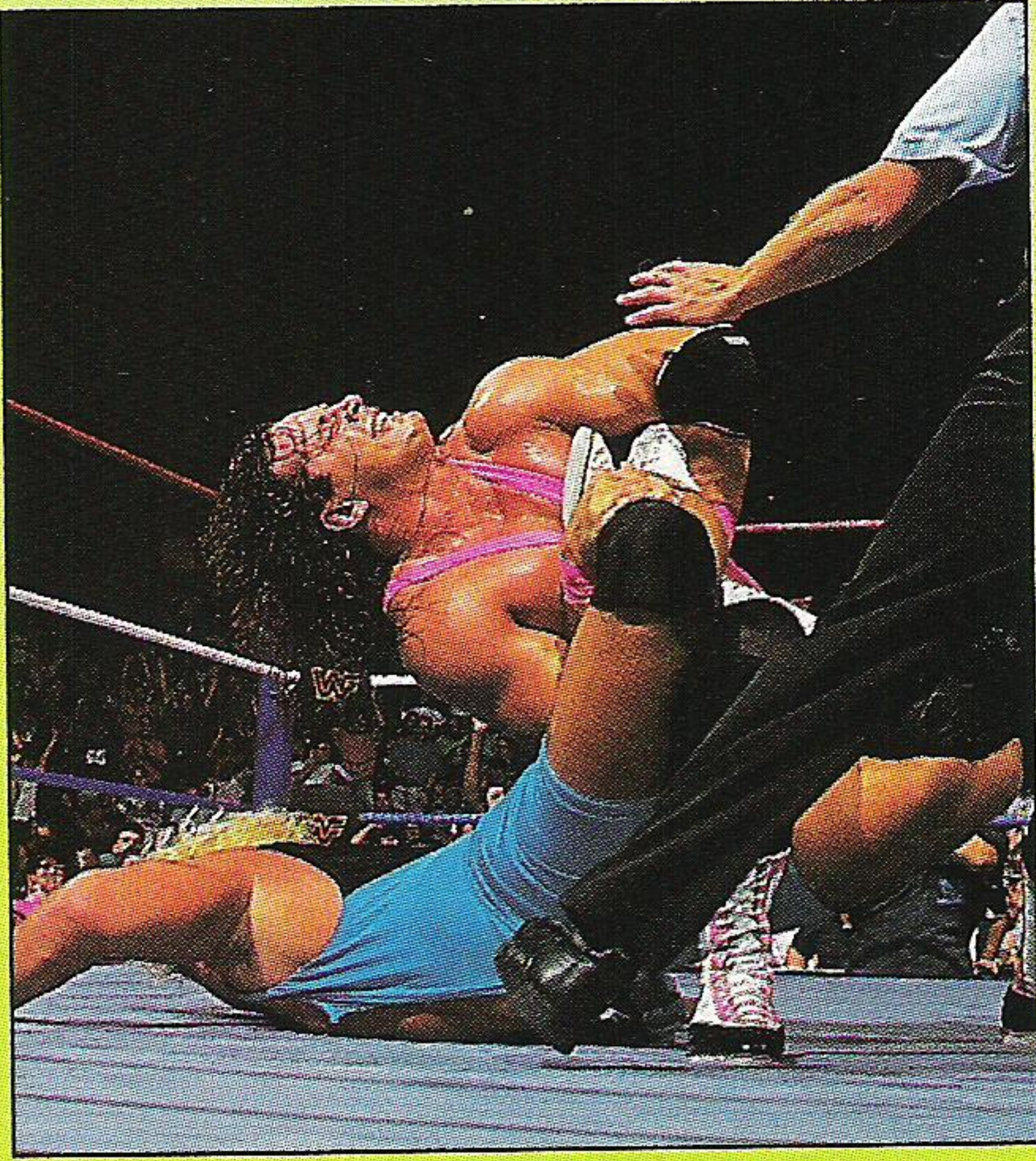
**GREATEST HITS
FROM THE HART**



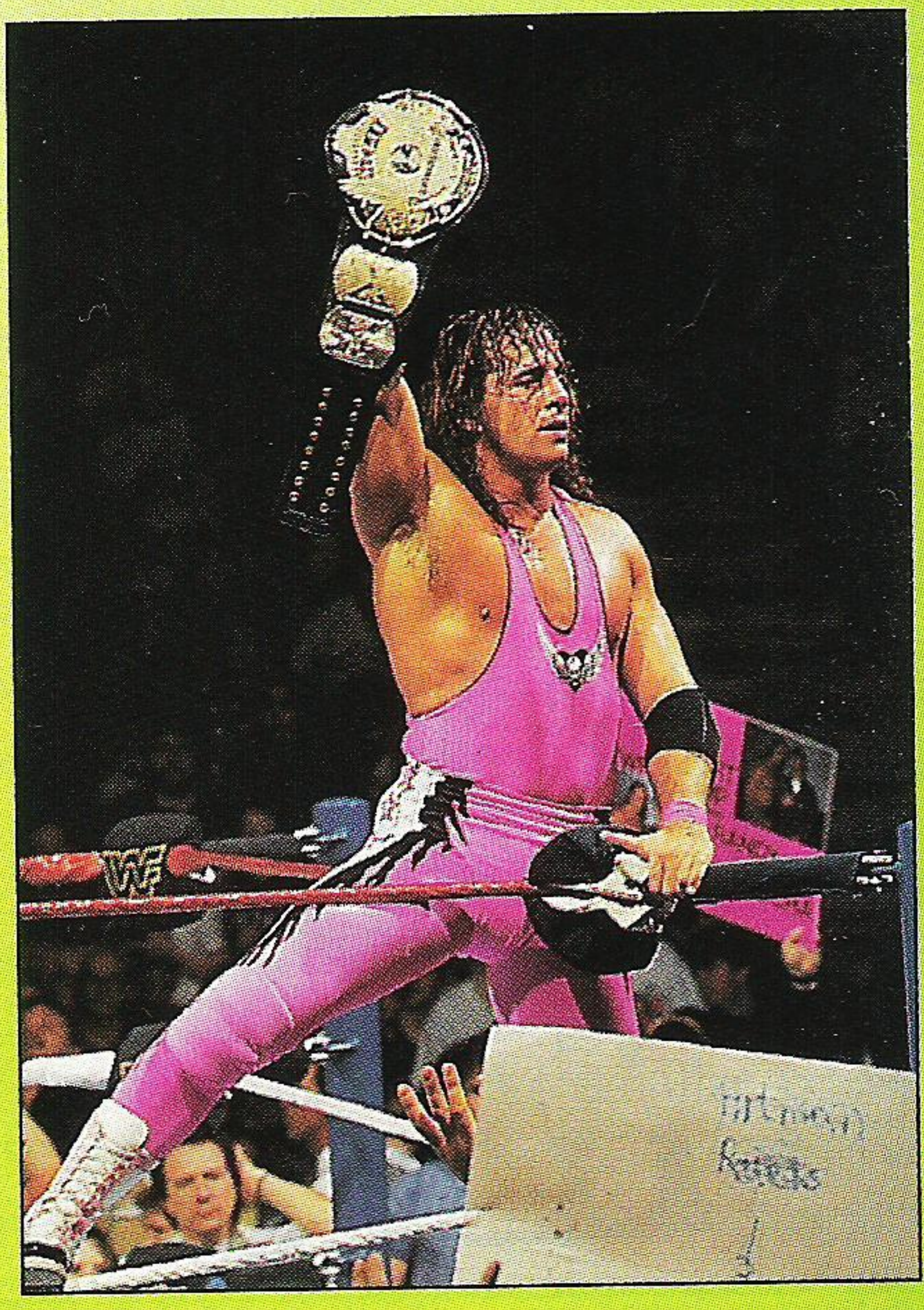
1992



1991



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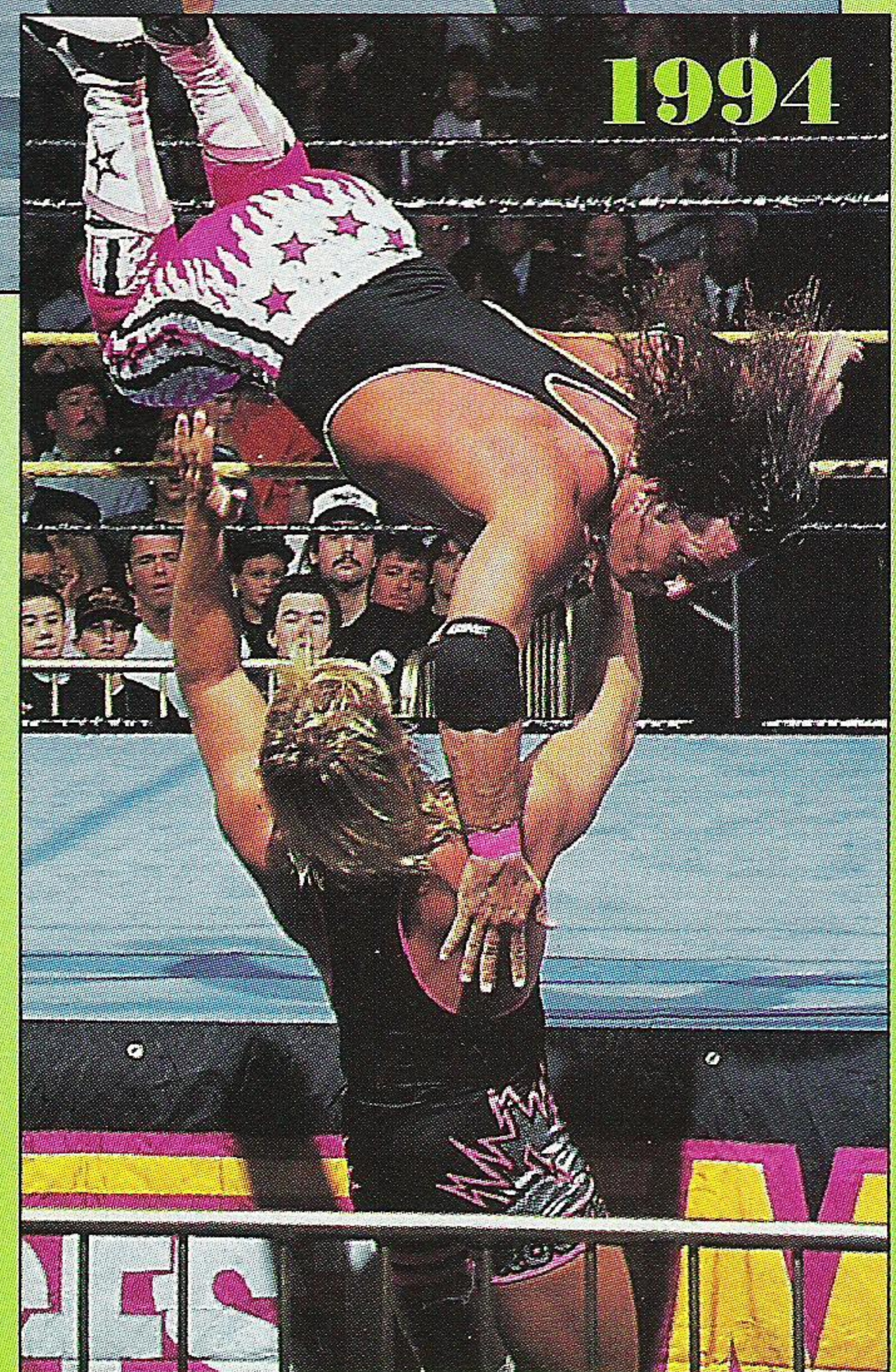
BY BRET "HIT MAN" HART

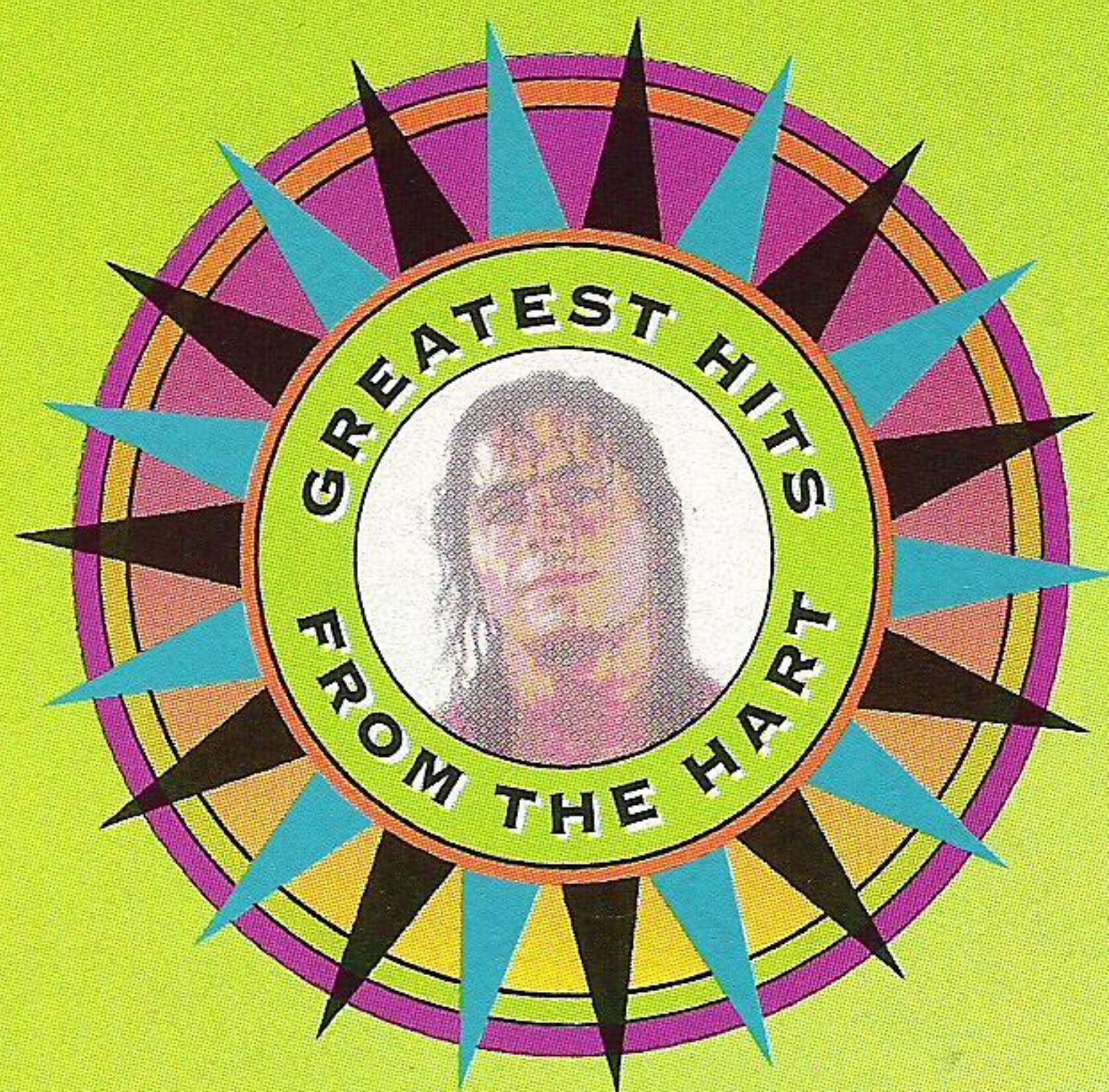
I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT I AM A TWO-TIME WINNER OF THE WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION'S TRIPLE CROWN. THAT IS, I HAVE WON ALL THREE FEDERATION CHAMPIONSHIPS, EACH ON TWO DIFFERENT OCCASIONS. HERE ARE SOME OF MY TOUGHEST MATCHES AS A CHAMPION AND AS A CHALLENGER.



In 1992, I captured the World Wrestling Federation Championship from Ric Flair in a match in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, which is close to my home base of Calgary. Regardless of what anybody has to say about him, I think that Ric Flair is an incredible athlete. He's a great technical wrestler who has held titles all over the world. But on that night his number came up when he met the Hit Man.

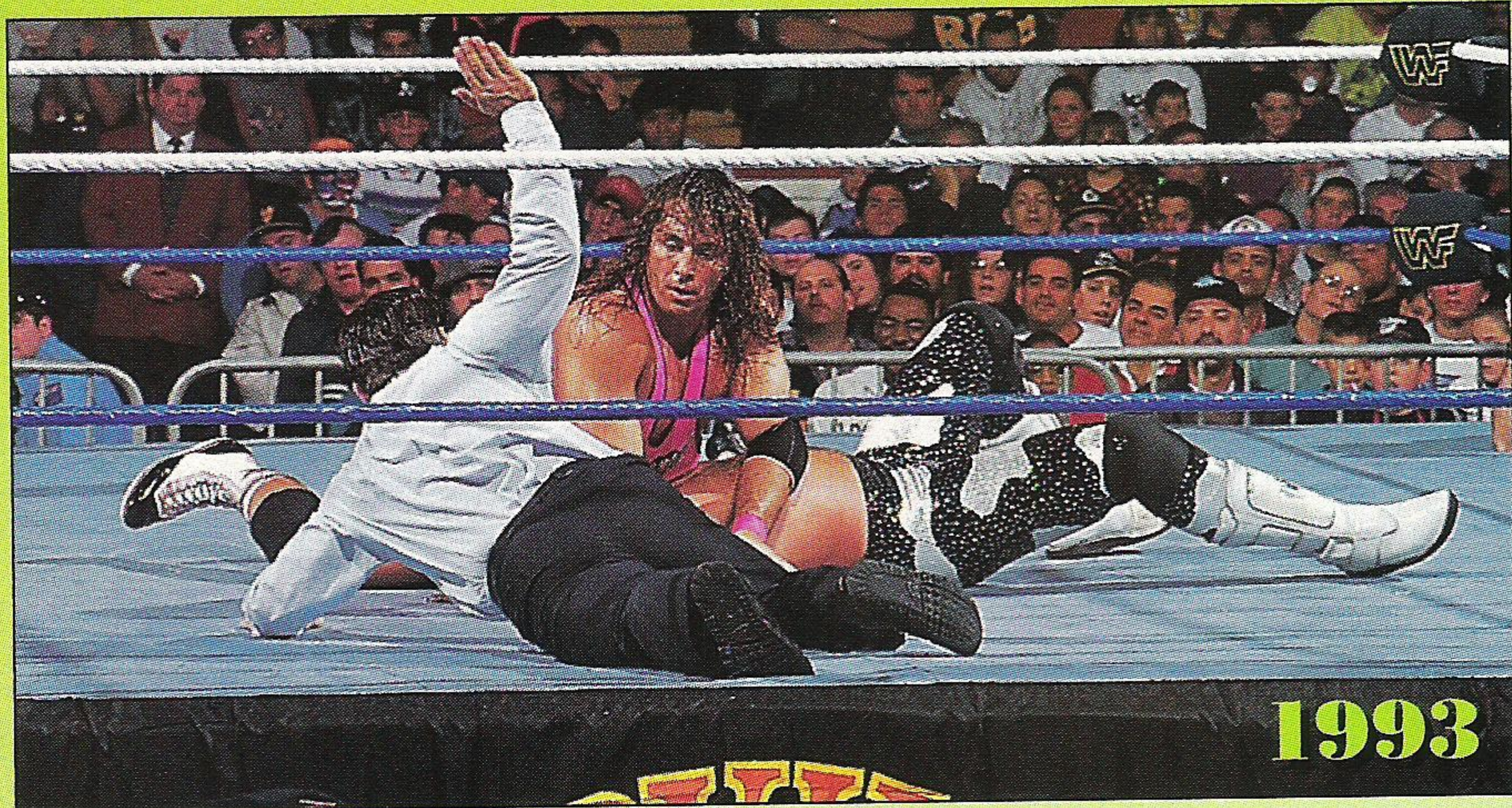
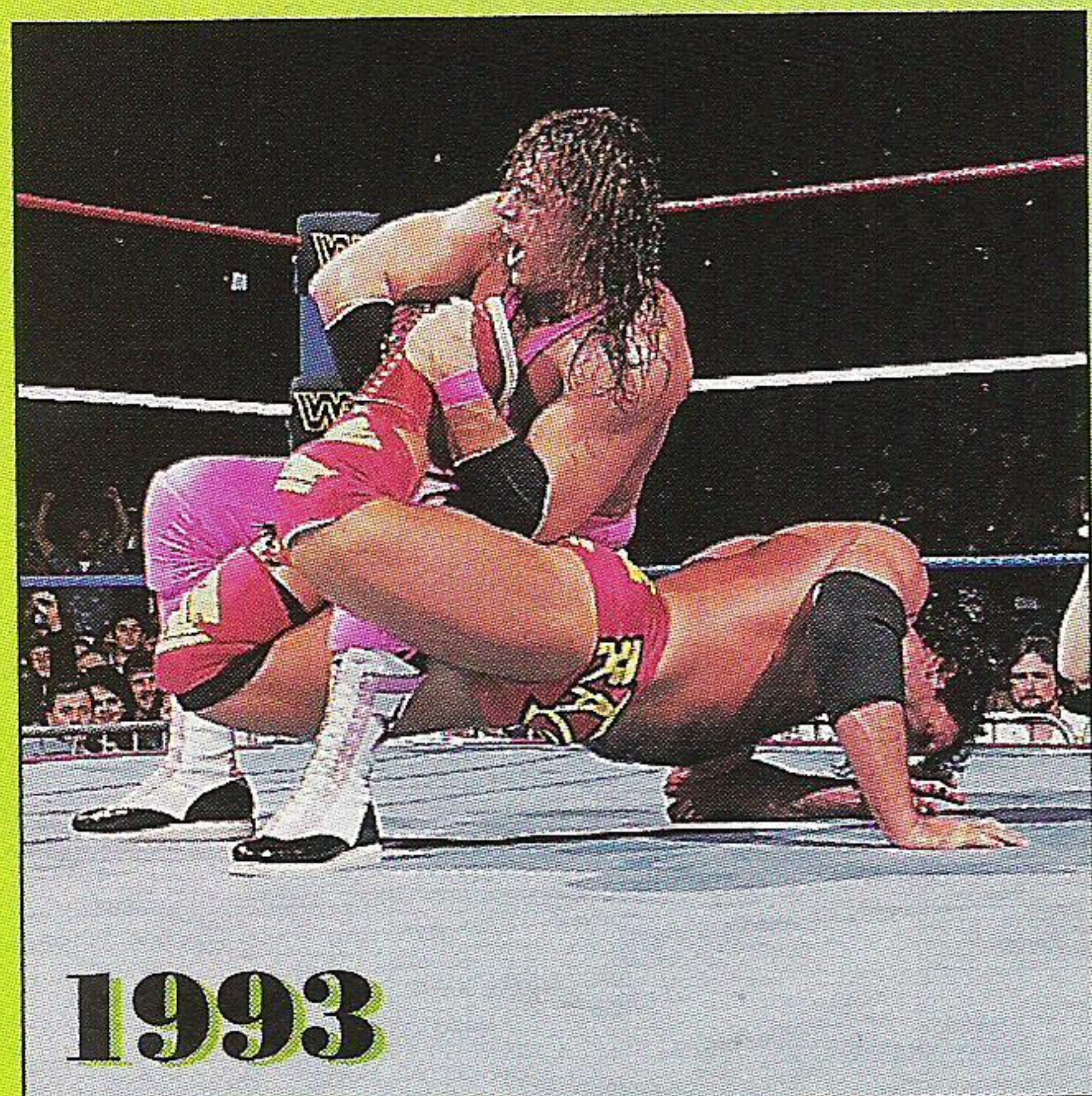
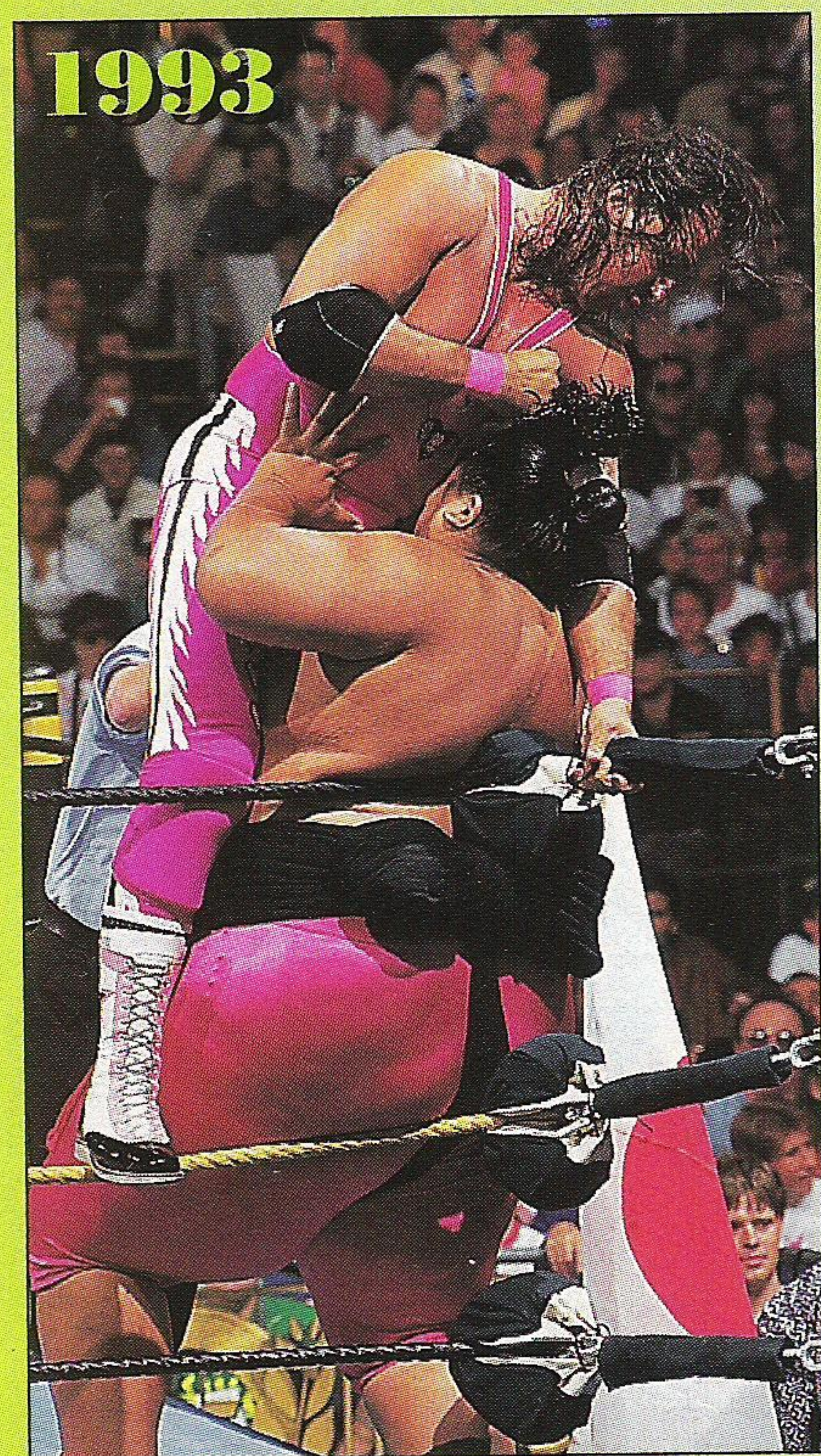
I matched Flair move for move and hold for hold and eventually triumphed before thousands of my fellow Canadians and millions of Hit Man fans the world over. During my initial Federation Championship reign, I defended the belt against any wrestler who wanted a crack at it. I was quite successful, as I was when I defeated Mr. Perfect for the Intercontinental Title in 1991 (at *SummerSlam*) and when I beat Yokozuna for the Championship (at



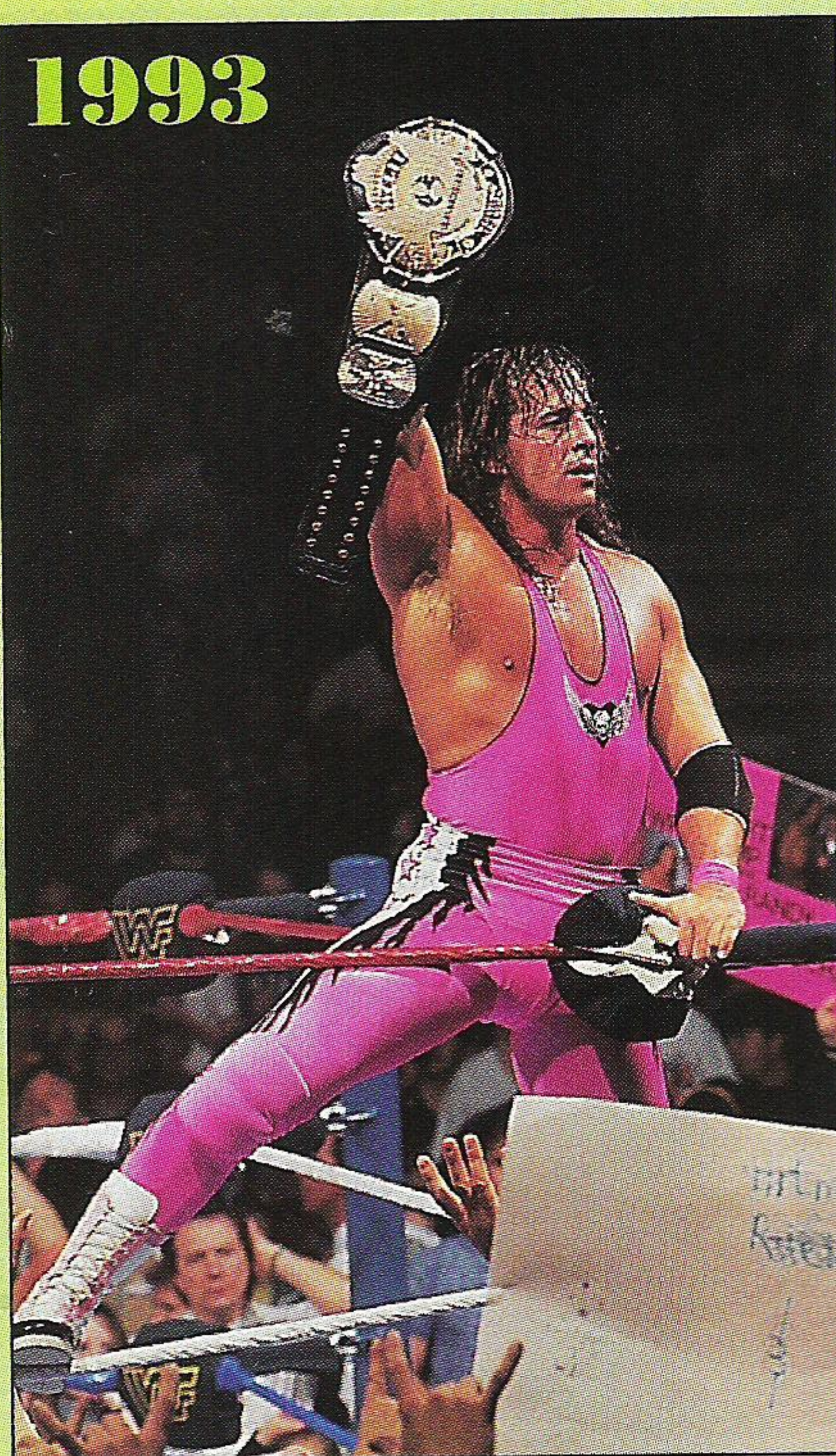


WrestleMania X this past March) after first losing an emotional match to my younger brother Owen. However, I'll touch on that topic later.

Before Yokozuna and Mr. Fuji robbed me of the (Federation)



1993



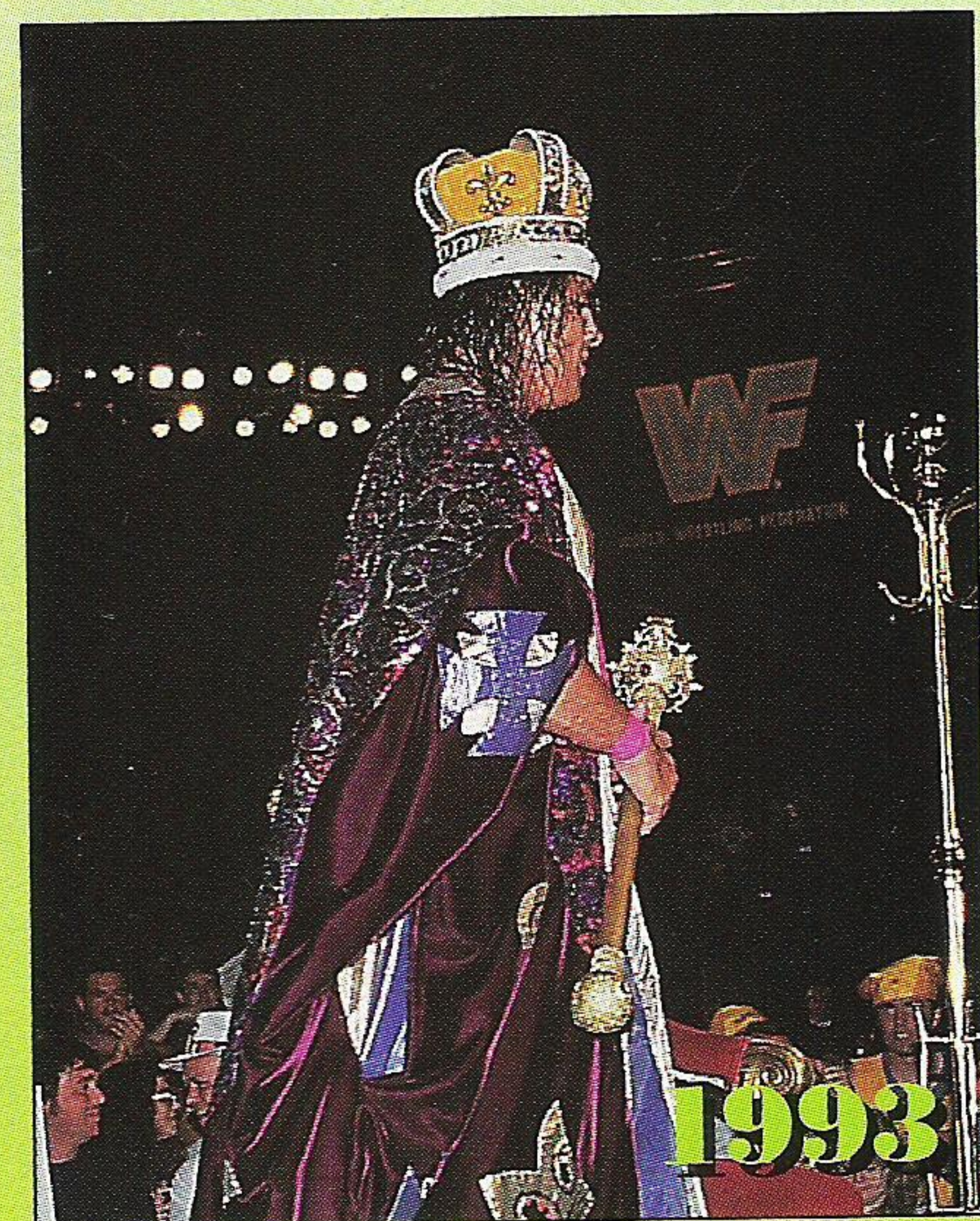
Title at *WrestleMania IX*, I had the opportunity to battle a future Intercontinental Champion, Razor Ramon, at 1993's *Royal Rumble*. Razor is as tough as they come. He's big and bad and knows how to fight his way through any situation. But at the time of our match, he wasn't much of a wrestler as far as technique goes. That's what worked to my advantage.

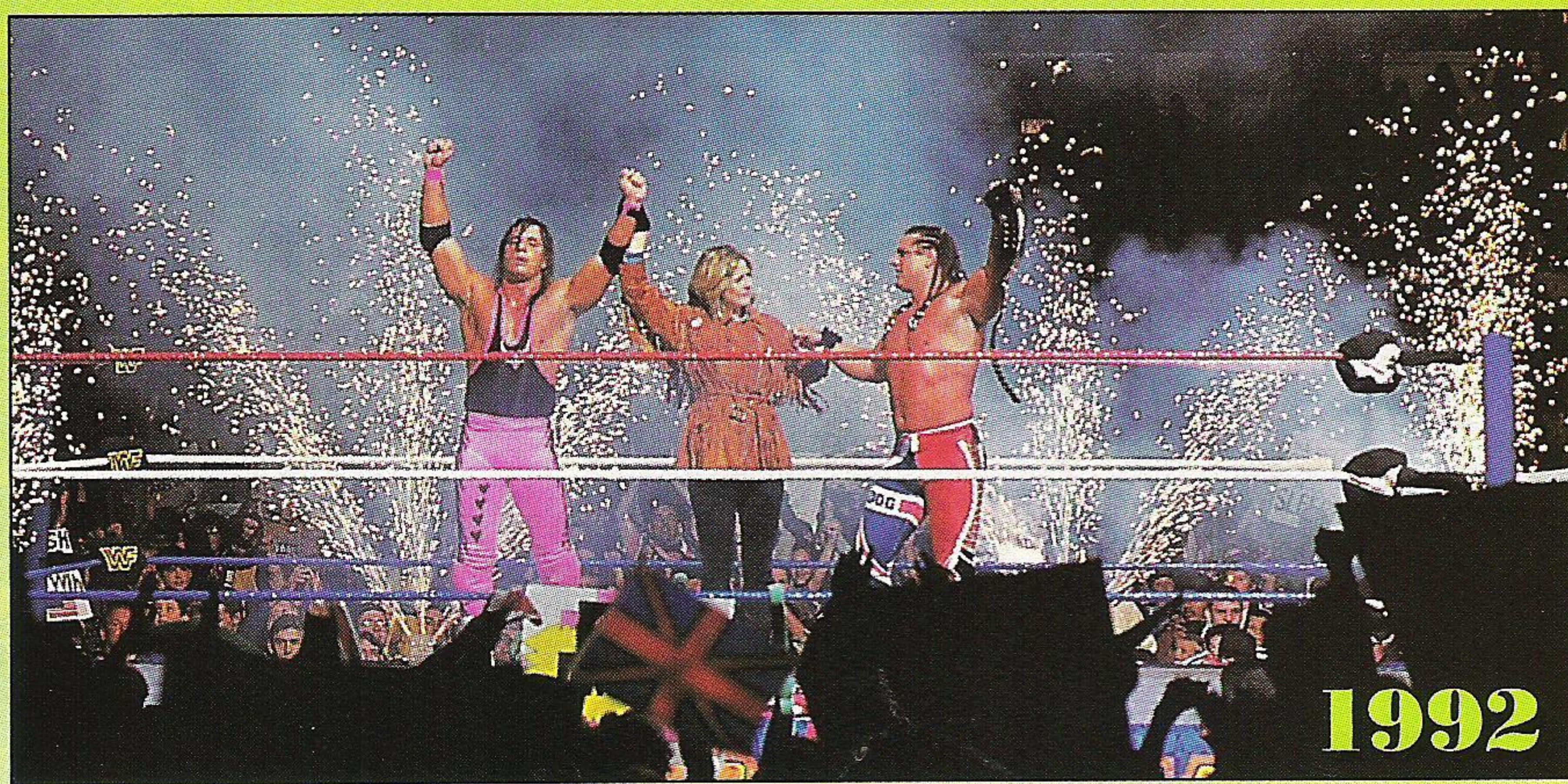
My wrestling skills helped me a lot during the *King of the Ring* tournament last year. I went through Razor, Perfect and Bam Bam Bigelow (all in a single evening) to become King of the Ring and beat them all

with sound wrestling mechanics. Ironically, these same superstars are among the leading contenders in the World Wrestling Federation today for my belt.

Shawn Michaels, whom I have met on many occasions, is another contender. I competed against him at two successive *Survivor Series* ('92 and '93), and he is, without a doubt, one of the fastest—and dirtiest—wrestlers in the game at this time, sort of like a younger, better version of Flair.

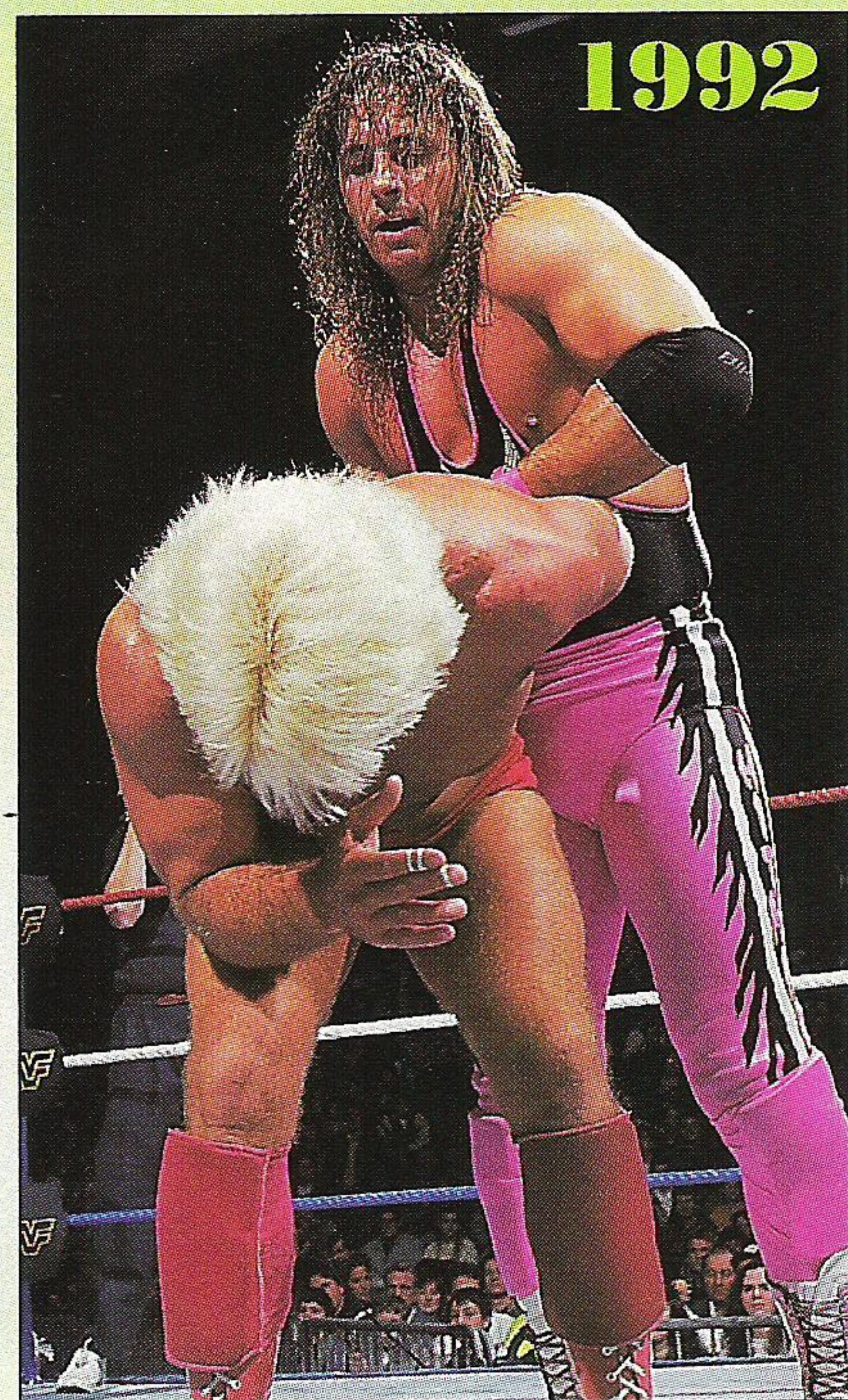
Besides wrestling my brother Owen, I would have to say that competing against my brother-in-law the British Bulldog at *SummerSlam '92* was emotionally rough on me. The Bulldog, who's married to my sister Diana, is a tough, powerful wrestler. In fact, my father and I





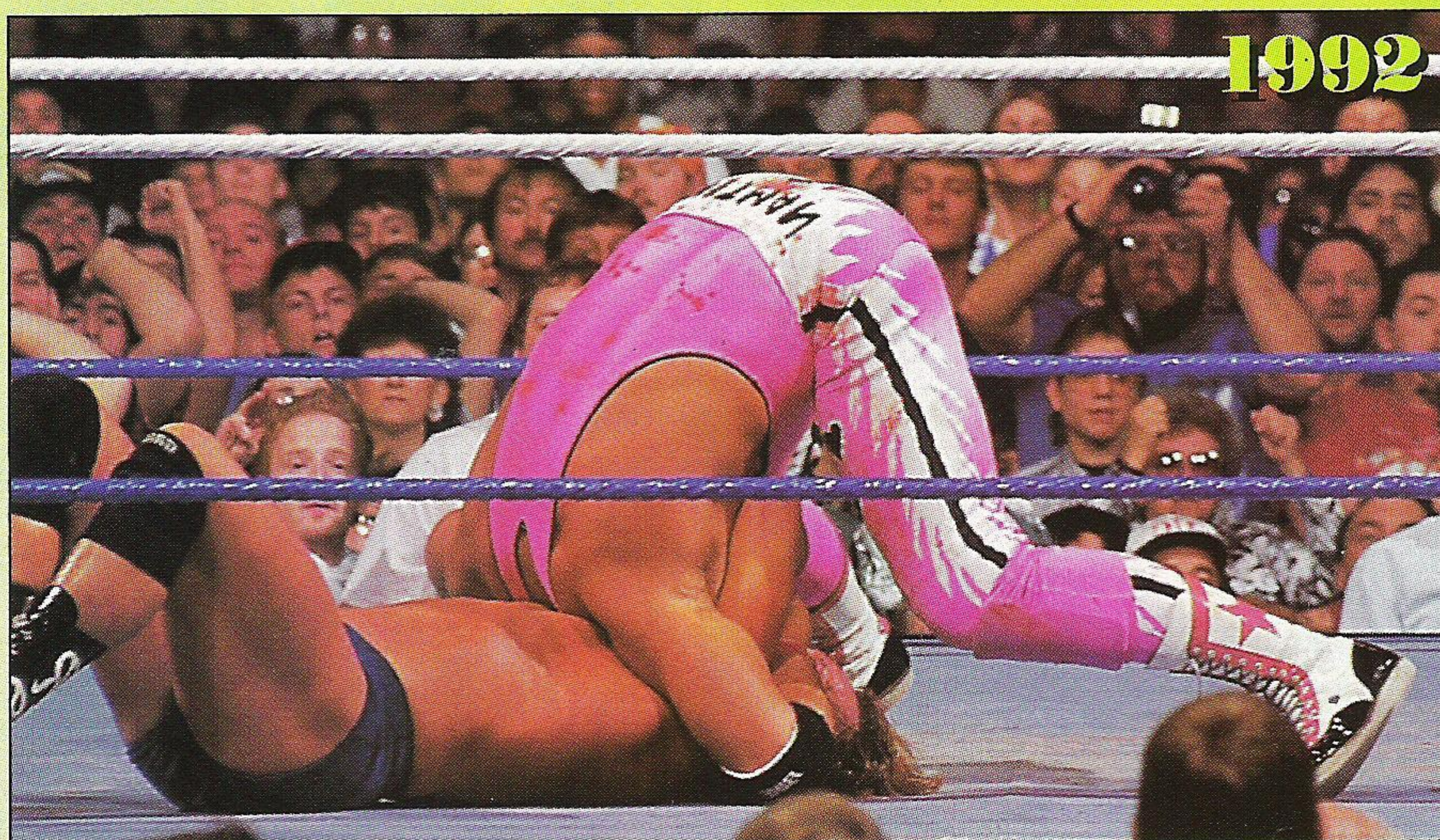
VIII, which went down before thousands of people at the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis, Indiana. And that's how I like it to be in the ring. He even busted me open!

But—when the smoke cleared—the Hit Man busted his bubble when I rolled Roddy up for the victory at *WrestleMania VIII*. The same thing happened when I made Perfect submit to the Sharpshooter at



helped train him years ago in Calgary. With that in mind, my whole family was divided. My children were even scrapping with the Bulldog's kids. It was also tough on my mother, brothers, sisters and the fans, who didn't know which one of us to cheer for.

At *SummerSlam*, that emotion wore on me psychologically. Now, I'm not making any excuses for losing the Intercontinental Belt; the Bulldog beat me fair and square, and he deserved the title. But mentally, it was a big burden. As I've said, I have a hard time fighting members of my family. There are so many people to think about (i.e., other family members). That same

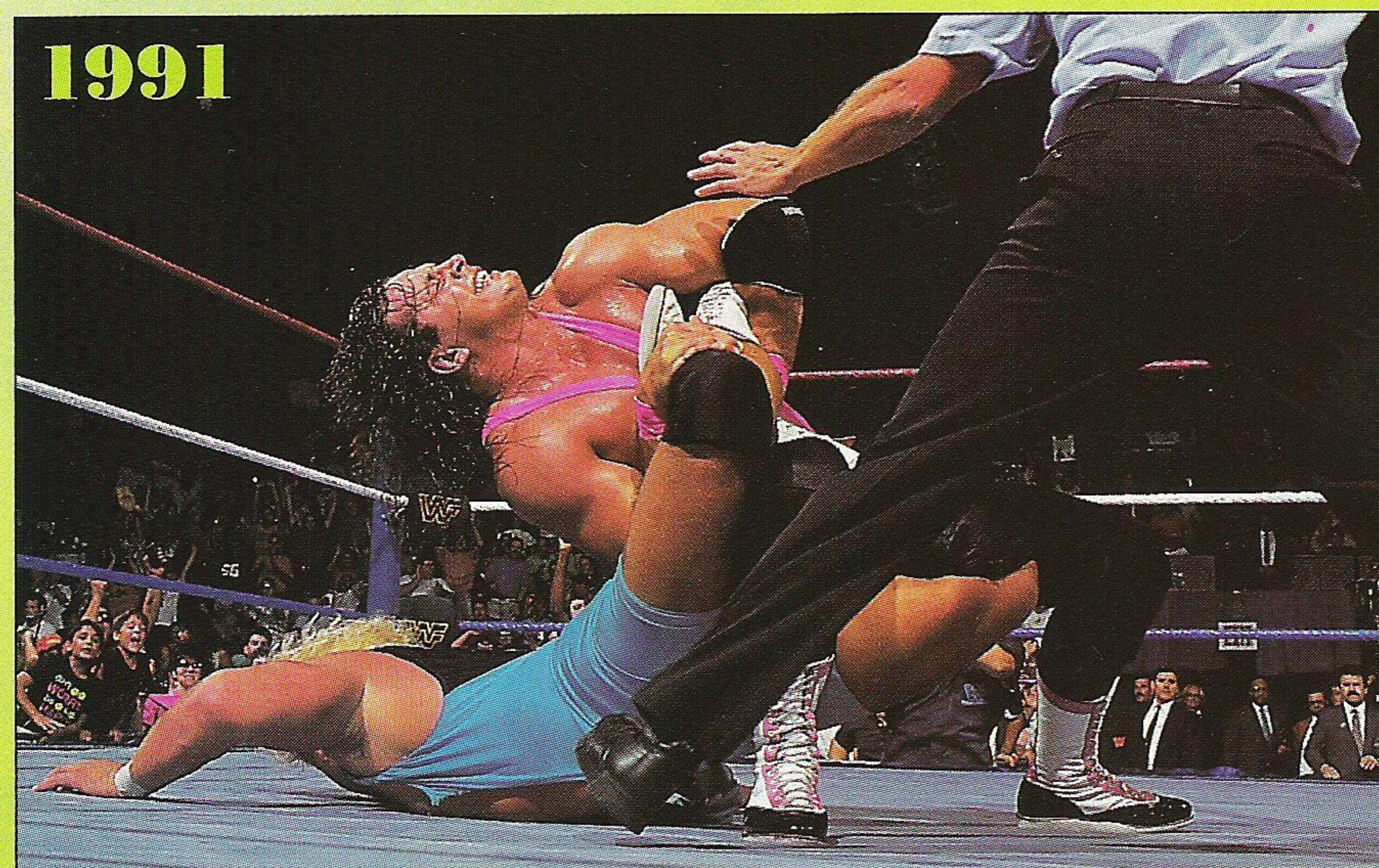


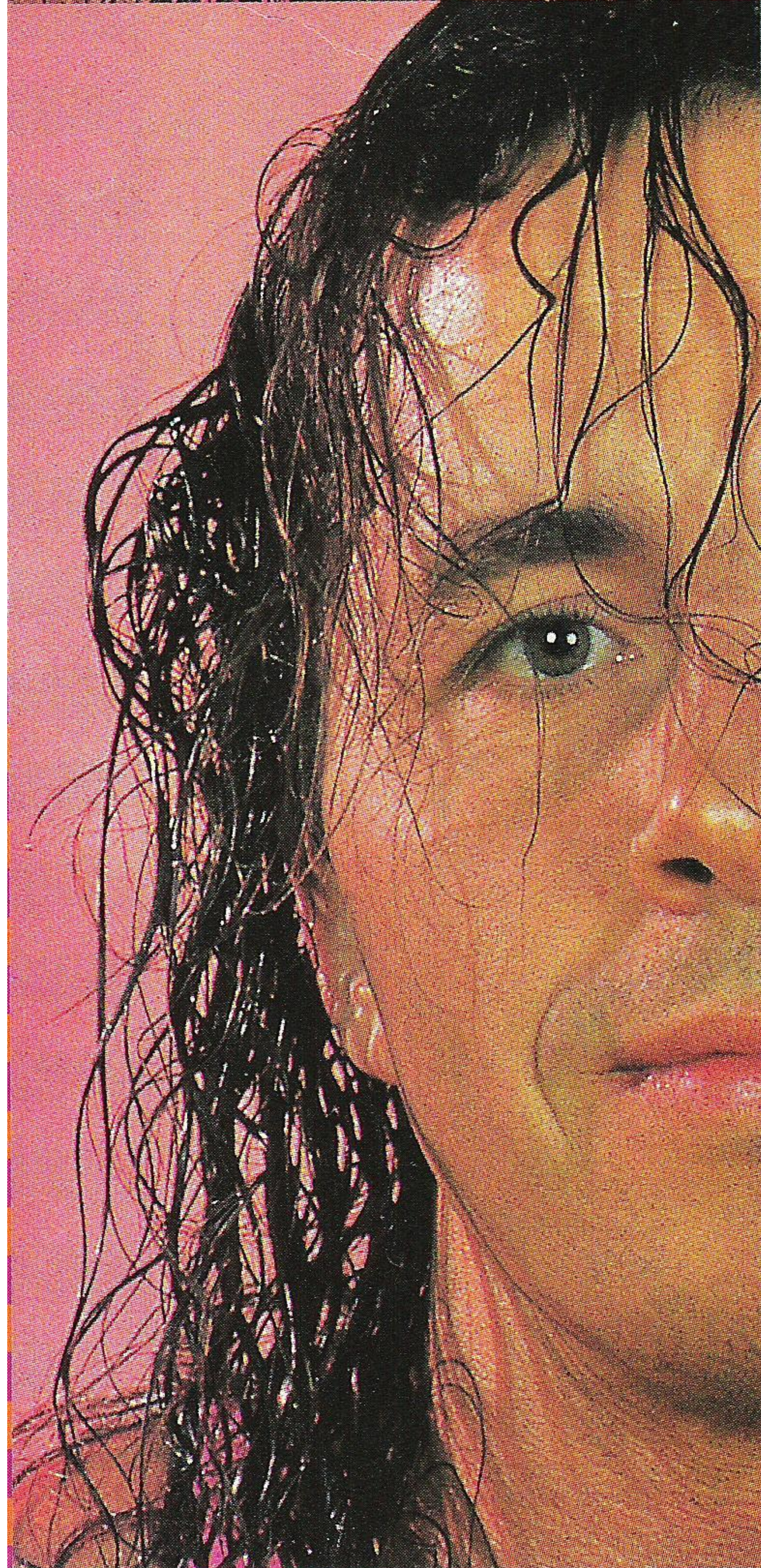
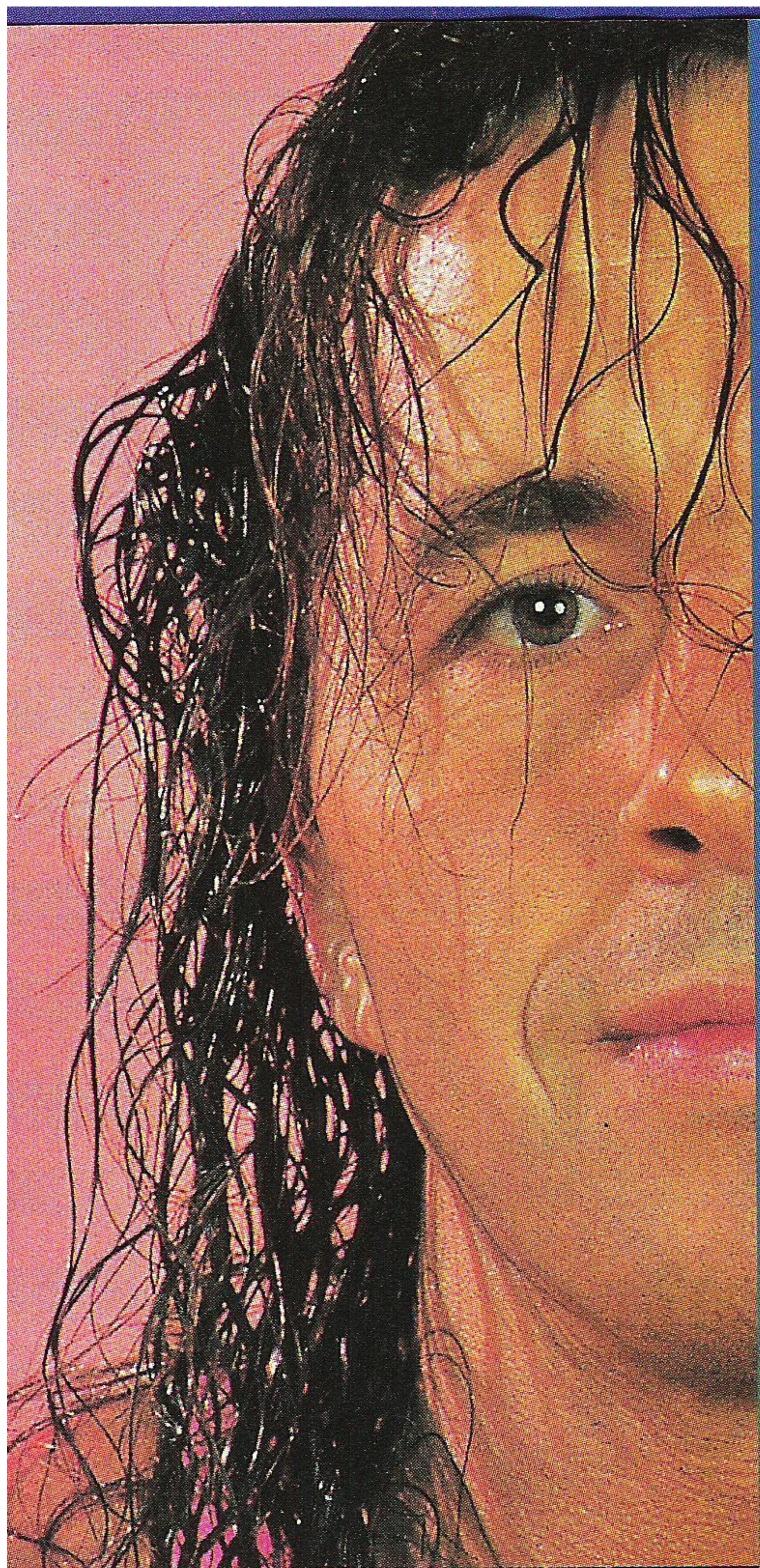
burden weighed on me in my match against Owen at *WrestleMania X*, but again, that is no excuse for my losing to him.

The Intercontinental Title I lost to the Bulldog I had won from Roddy Piper at *WrestleMania VIII*. Talk about a wild match! Although Piper and I are great friends, he didn't hold back an inch at *WrestleMania*

SummerSlam '91. He said he was unbeatable. He said he was the greatest, and he claimed he had an ace in the hole with that idiot who used to manage him (Bobby "The Brain" Heenan).

However, Perfect or anybody else will never be the best there is, the best there was and the best that ever will be! **WF**





COMMENTS

NOT THE

IT

MAN

WHAT BRET HART'S COLLEAGUES ARE SAYING ABOUT HIM

TATANKA

"Bret Hart is a personal friend of mine. He is a real good person and a very good family man. He is an extremely dedicated person. He's a seasoned veteran who's been in the business a long time. It's been handed down to him from generations from his father, so there's a lot of wrestling years in that family, and anybody should be able to respect that! As far as being champion, everyone is proud that he's on top."



FORMER WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION GREAT ARNIE SKAALAND—"I've known Bret since he was a child. I wrestled his dad many times. His dad was a great wrestler, and he's following in his dad's footsteps. He's quite a boy."



FORMER FEDERATION GREAT CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW—"Bret Hart is a great athlete. He is a great champion! In my book, he's done it all in the World Wrestling Federation."

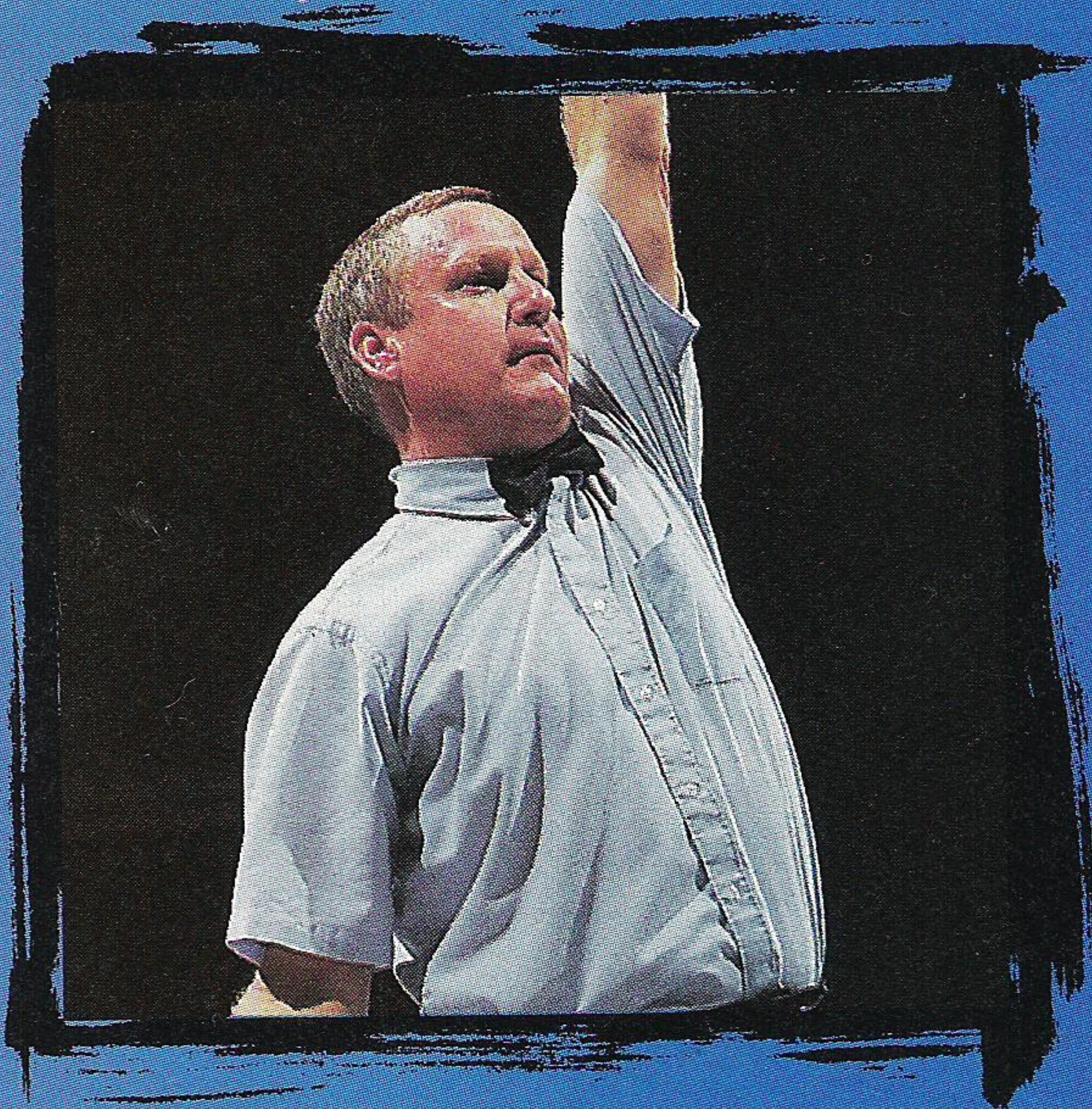
JOHNNY POLO

"Well, he probably is as good as he says he is. You know, the best there is, the best there was, the best there is, whatever that rhetoric is. But he's not unbeatable, and I could manage anyone who could single-handedly demolish him. I could beat him if I wanted to, but I'm not in the ring; I'm a manager. I am undefeated in the ring, but I just don't choose to wrestle Bret 'Hit Man' Hart at this juncture in my career."

LEX LUGER

"I think Bret Hart exemplifies what you can accomplish through hard work and dedication. He goes up against guys sometimes 300 pounds bigger than he is night after night, and the results speak for themselves—he's the champion. I respect him, but at the same time he's someone I want to be, and I'm looking forward to wrestling him. With the type of competitor he is, somewhere down the road we're going to meet."





EARL HEBNER

"Bret's a terrific wrestler. He's one of the best champions that the World Wrestling Federation has ever had. He's got a lot of charisma, and he's just ring-oriented. He knows a lot of wrestling holds, whereas most wrestlers just get in there and fist-fight. However, when he has to, he can lay 'em in there just as good as anybody! No matter what, he always seem to outdo his opponents."

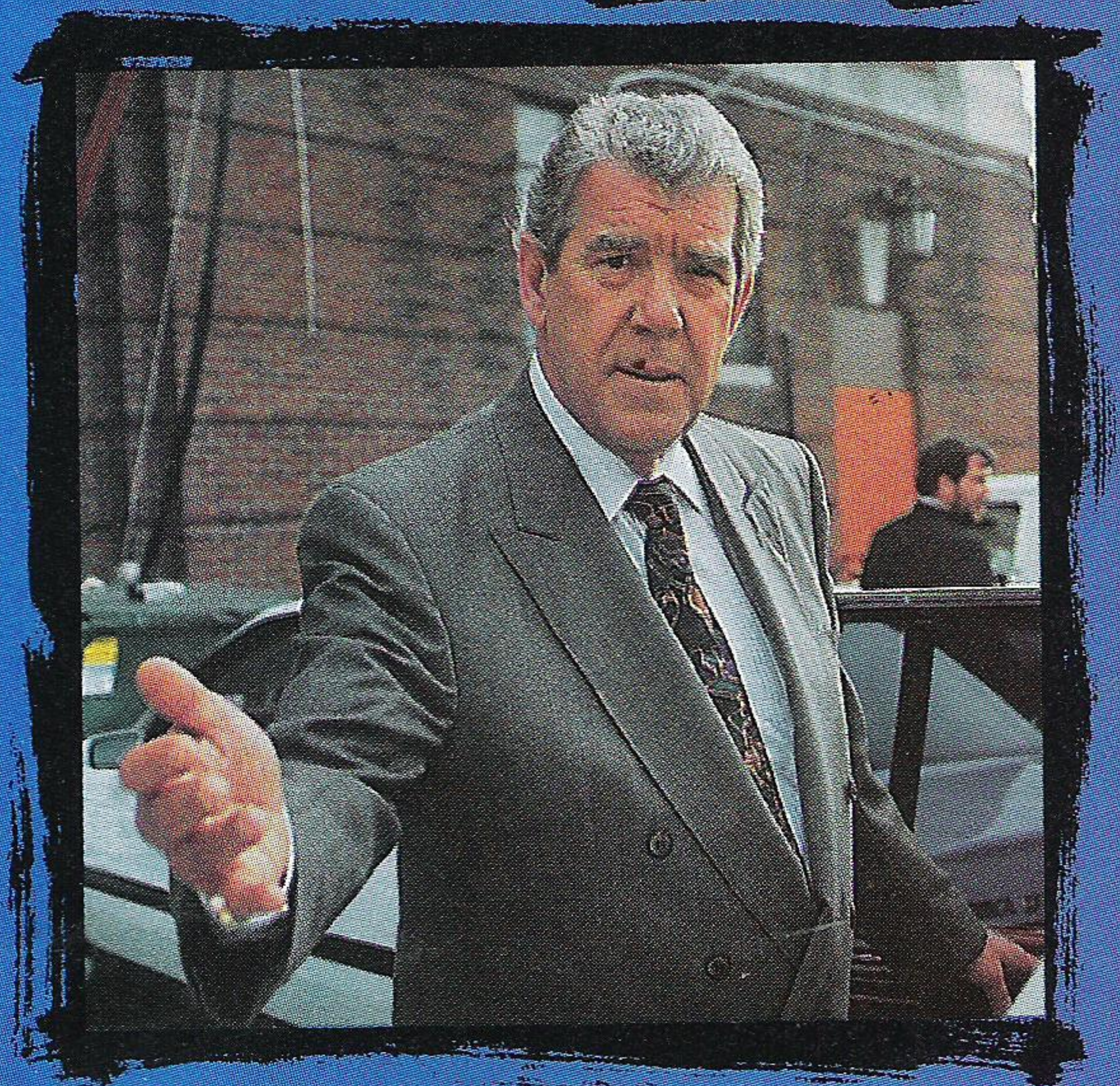
FEDERATION REFEREE

DIESEL—"He's got a lot of heart, but he don't want any part of the D-Man. Hart could use all the techniques he wants—it won't matter. I don't know an armbar from a crowbar. Soon I'll be wearing his gold!"

JACK TUNNEY

"I'm really proud of Bret Hart. Nobody has worked harder to get where he is than Bret. I think he deserves everything that he has. He's just a really dedicated athlete. He had a lot to overcome, and he's done it. The entire World Wrestling Federation and I are proud to have Bret 'Hit Man' Hart as our champion. He exemplifies everything that I believe a professional wrestler should be."

FEDERATION PRESIDENT



MACHO MAN RANDY SAVAGE—"I think he's a great champion, brother. I've got R-E-S-P-E-C-T for him. I'd have even more R-E-S-P-E-C-T for him if he gives me a shot at his title! But right now, he's the man. DIG IT!"



DINK

"Bret Hart is probably the greatest technical wrestler in the history of the Federation. A lot of people think that everything is size and strength, but it's not. Bret has proved that it isn't. He's got a lot of heart. Ha-ha, he-he, I didn't mean that as a pun! All kidding aside, he has the heart of a giant. He may even have more heart than my good friend Dink. The joke is on the rest of the World Wrestling Federation, because Bret Hart is going to be champion for a long time to come."

ADAM BOMB

"Bret Hart is a great competitor and a great champion. He does lack size, but his heart and determination are outstanding. His finishing maneuver, the Sharpshooter, is a great finishing move—but it can be countered. He can be beaten on any given day, at any given time. There are ways to beat him, and I'm gonna do it. It's just a matter of me getting a shot at his title under the right circumstances. Believe me, sooner or later he will feel the wrath of Adam Bomb!"

LUNA VACHON—"I am the Mistress of Mayhem, and he is the Excellence of Execution, but there is no way he can hold a candle to his brother Owen. His brother Owen has been beating him since he was 3 years old."

MABEL FROM M.O.M.

"I know Bret personally; he's a heck of a guy. I think he's one of the greatest wrestlers there's ever been, if not the greatest wrestler there's ever been. I think that it's going to take a pretty awesome challenger to take the belt away from him this time. He's determined to hold on to it, and he deserves it. I'm real proud of him, and I think everybody in the World Wrestling Federation should be proud of him. The only thing he has to learn now is how to rap!"

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION GREAT TONY GAREA—"I wrestled Bret Hart toward the end of my career, and I found him to be one of the greatest wrestlers I ever competed against. I don't think we could ask for a better champion!"

TED DIBIASE

"Bret Hart, much like myself, comes from a wrestling background. He is a second-generation wrestler. Wrestling has been in his blood all his life. That's something about Bret Hart that I can identify with. I know what inspires him. But his motto—the best there was, the best there is and the best there will ever be—I'd have to debate that. Maybe Bret Hart thinks a little bit too much about himself. There is a fine line between being confident and being too cocky."



1-2-3 KID

"I think Bret Hart is the single best wrestler in the world today. He doesn't have any wasted movements in the ring; everything he does is right on the money. He's a great champion, and he represents the Federation with a lot of pride."



LOU ALBANO

"Bret Hart comes from a great wrestling family. His father and I are very good friends. I believe that Bret is a legend in his own time. He has a heart of gold and the guts of a lion. I wholeheartedly endorse him."

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS...

BAM BAM BIGELOW—"For a small man, Bret Hart possesses more athletic ability than anybody else I ever met in the wrestlin' world. He possesses strength and speed, and he can last. But I'm the baddest and the best. The more I wrestle the Hit Man, the faster and the smarter I've been gettin'. The way I see it, sooner or later the Hit Man will be mine!"

IRS—"Bret 'Hit Man' Hart is probably one of the biggest tax cheats in the World Wrestling Federation. He's been here a long time, and he's been cheating on his taxes a long time. But at the same time that I say this, he's also one of the most established wrestlers who has ever come through the Federation. With his expertise and techniques, he probably stands as one of the all-time greats. Not that he could beat IRS."

SHAWN MICHAELS—"Bret Hart is a guy who has definitely paid his dues. He is the Excellence of Execution—or so he claims. In my opinion, he is without a doubt one of the top two wrestlers in all the world. He's right up there with the Heartbreak Kid, Shawn Michaels. However, I am the most gifted man in all the world of wrestling."

JAMES E. CORNETTE—"I try not to think about unpleasant subjects, and that's exactly what Bret Hart is—an unpleasant subject. The World Wrestling Federation has always been on Bret Hart's side. I think what he needs to do is brush his teeth, wash his hair, and he obviously needs to get a new family because his is dysfunctional! He also needs to give Yokozuna another title shot, because if Yokozuna had a fair shot, he could beat him easily!"

FORMER FEDERATION GREAT RENE GOULET—"I first met Bret in 1977 in Atlanta, Georgia. Even though he was only 17 at the time, he really impressed me. I could see he had a great potential for wrestling. The rest is history."

BUSHWHACKER BUTCH—"We worked for Stu Hart years ago. It was one of the first places we went to when we came to North America. Bret was just starting out then. He showed a lot of promise. We actually wrestled all the Hart boys, and out of all of them, Bret by far had the most promise. He was the best athlete, and he proved it!"

BUSHWHACKER LUKE—"What my cousin Butch says covers it all. This is now Bret's second time as a champion. We're right behind him like the rest of the people are. I hope he holds on to the belt for a long time to come!"

RAZOR RAMON—"Good for him because he won the belt, but let's talk about me, chico. I wrestled Bret Hart twice, last year's King of the Ring and the Royal Rumble in '93. I got to admit, Hart came out on top twice. He's good. He's real good, chico, but I think I pretty good too. Hit Man, if you're listening, chico, why don't you give the Bad Guy a shot at your gold?"

QUEBECER JACQUES—"He's a good technical wrestler. He's very ugly though; I got to tell you that. He doesn't have anything going for him physically, that's for sure. The only reason the female fans go crazy over him is that only ugly girls come to watch wrestling."

QUEBECER PIERRE—"Viva Le Quebec!"

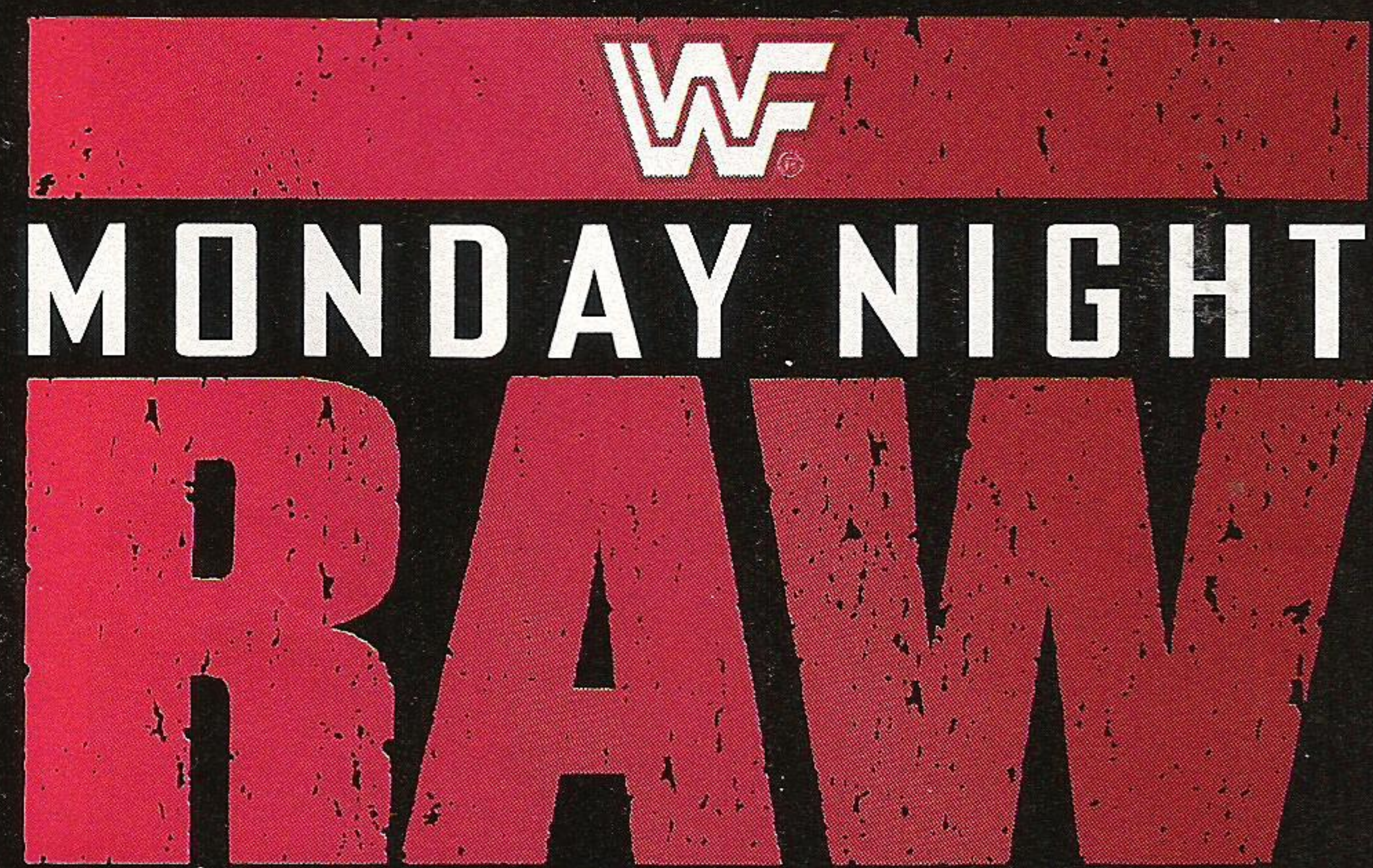
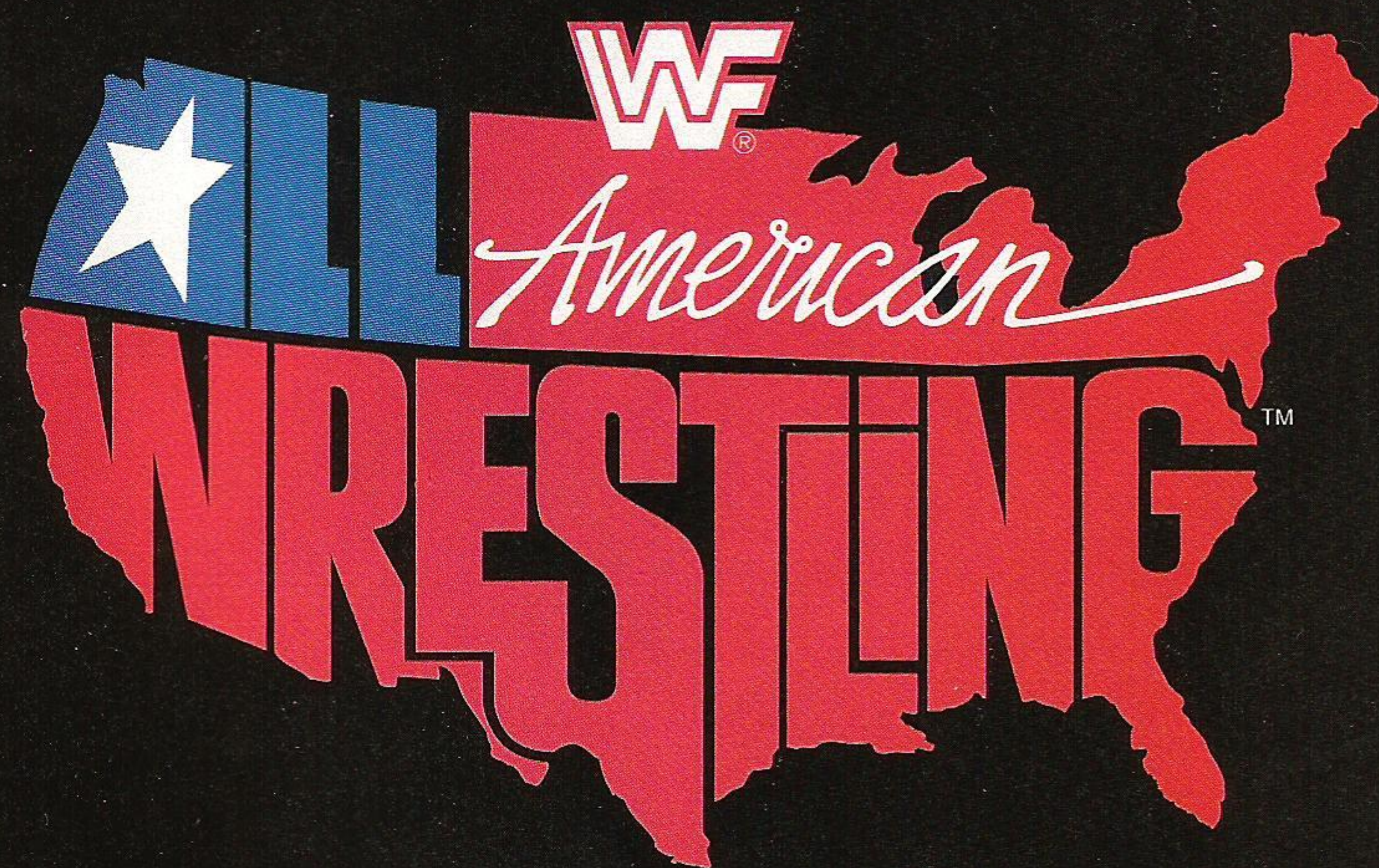
HARVEY WIPPLEMAN—"I think Bret Hart is a great athlete. I won't take any of that away from him. The only thing I will take away from him is that he does not have the guts to put his championship on the line against Kwang or Adam Bomb. He's avoiding their challenges, and that's the only reason he remains World Wrestling Federation Champion! That's all I got to say."

DOUBLE J JEFF JARRETT—"I'll give him this—he tries hard, he tries REAL hard and he does know a few wrestling moves. But there's one thing, and it's cut clear and dry. He will not accept the challenge of Double J Jeff Jarrett. When he does accept the challenge, his reign will be over!"

MO from M.O.M.—"I personally think that Bret Hart's a great guy both in and out of the ring. He's a compassionate person who cares about the wrestling business and everybody involved in it. He's just an all-around great guy. The consummate professional. He's the man."

EARTHQUAKE—"He's a great wrestler with excellent techniques. He calls himself the Excellence of Execution. I think a lot of guys found out through the years that what he says is usually true. There's nothing he can't get out of. He's got a counter for everything, and that's what makes him so good." **WF**

THREE WAYS



...ALL ON



THREE DAYS

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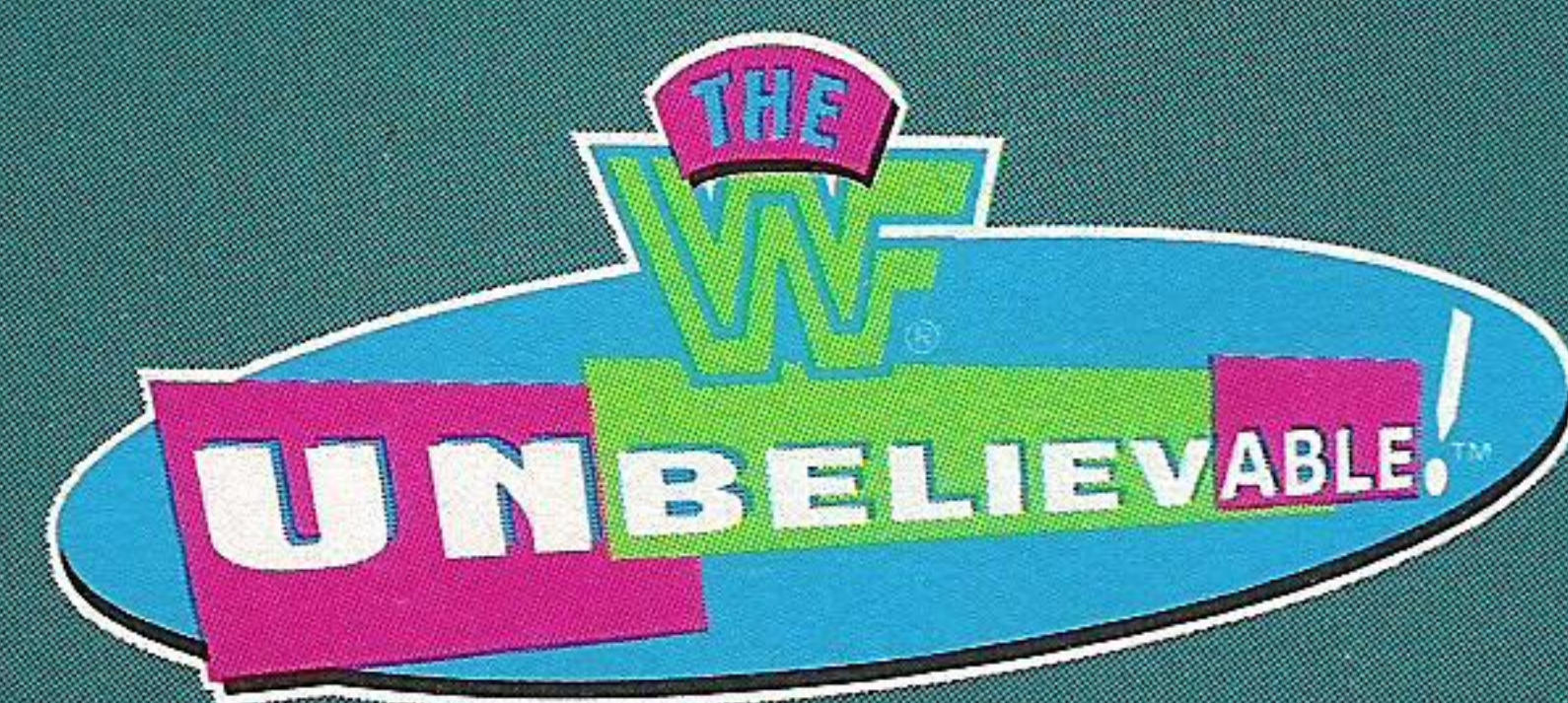
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By Keith Elliot Greenberg



WANT to Hit MAN

Even as he reeled in pain on the canvas and stumbled back to the dressing room, Bret Hart knew his aching legs would heal. What wouldn't mend was the agony of having lost a brother through jealousy and misunderstanding.

"If there had been a way to repair my relationship with Owen, I would have done it," the World Wrestling Federation Champion says, reflecting on the night his younger sibling shocked the world by attacking him in the center of the ring at the Royal Rumble this past January. "And every time I look at the worry on my mother's face, I wish I could have found that way. But, for some reason, Owen won't settle for anything less than being my enemy, and I think the whole family is suffering for it."

The ordeal is especially sorrowful to the Hit Man, who grew up in a home filled with the happy voices of brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews, knowing that—even as his father traveled from town to town as a professional wrestler—the family could never lose its cohesiveness.

"I'm very pro-family," Bret says. "My parents went through good times and bad times, but we always knew they were behind us. Even though I'm wrestling in Germany one day and Japan the next, I try to maintain a family life. It's the right thing to do, and I think my children appreciate it."

Soft-spoken and almost bashful about many personal matters, Hart remains protective of his four children and wife, Julie, whom he met 14 years ago while touring through her home town of Regina, Saskatchewan.

"Back in those days, very few fans outside of Canada could tell you who Bret Hart was," Hit Man remembers. "Sure, the Hart brothers were pretty well known in Calgary, where we grew up and wrestled every week. But in America [in the late 1970s], you had your big names like Bob Backlund, Andre the Giant and Chief Jay Strongbow. Those were the people everybody talked about. When Julie and I met, I was no different from a lot of the kids I see starting out in wrestling today. I could have been

great, or I could have been a failure. She didn't know if I'd end up a champion or retire in a year because I couldn't take it. But she believed in me and supported me through all the bruises and broken bones. That's what marriage is all about. And it's an institution that I respect."

When Bret hears about friends who've given up on their marriages or reads about the swelling divorce rate, he feels discouraged. "Families need to stay together and stick together," he

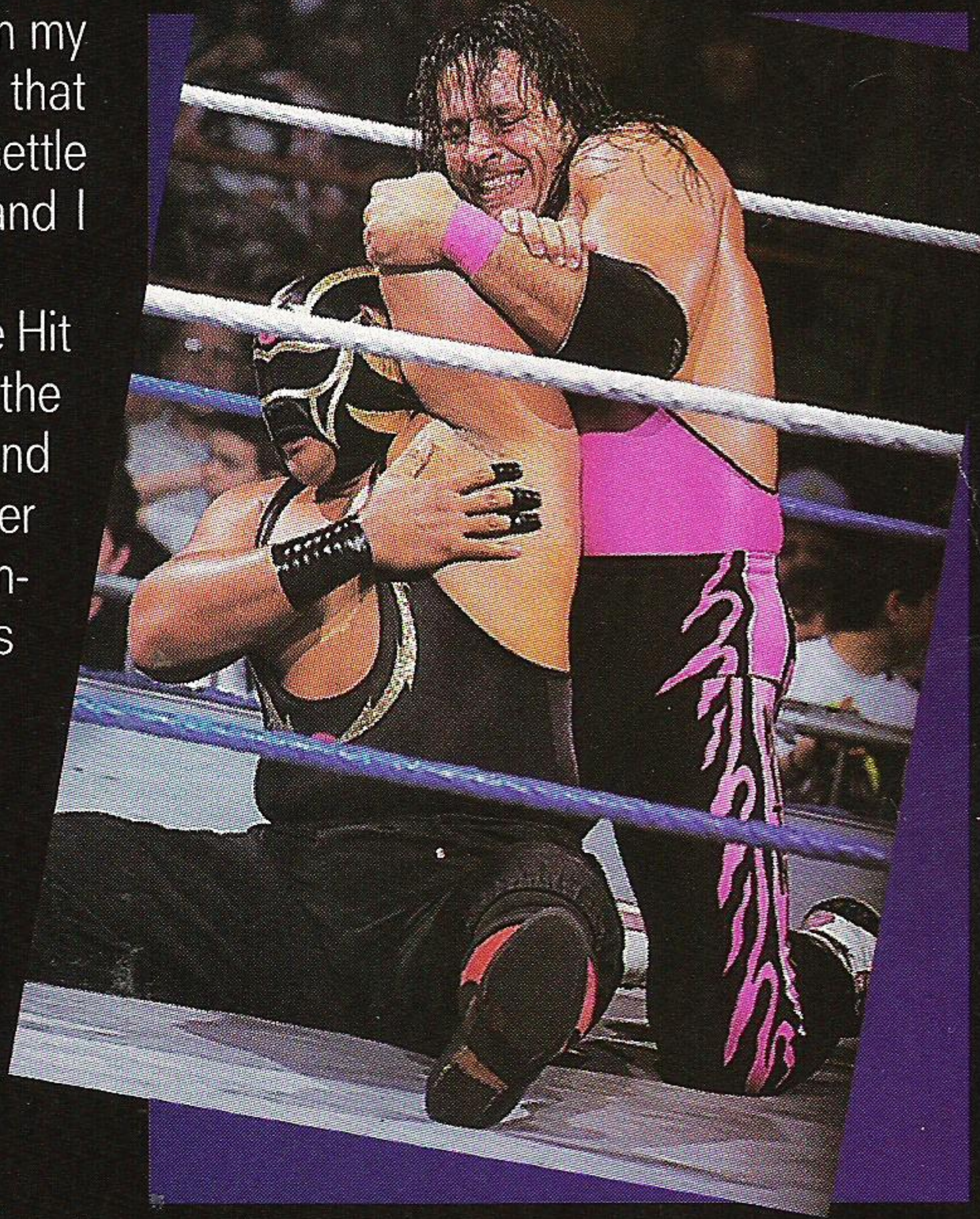
says. "When you sign on, you should sign on for life. Look at all the problems we have—drugs, crime.

A lot of times, those crimes are committed by people from broken families, people whose parents didn't team up to keep their kids out of trouble. Look, I don't condemn anybody whose marriage didn't work out. I'm not a judgmental person, and everyone makes mistakes. I just think that parents have to realize that things are never going to be easy, but they should put the thought and time into their marriage and at least try to make it work."

When he's at home with his children—sons Dallas, 9, and Blade, 3, and daughters Jade, 11, and Alexandra (also known as "Beans"), 6—Bret switches his focus from his mat glories to the youngsters' interests.

The kids tape the family's favorite TV show, *The Simpsons*, just so everyone can watch the program together when the superstar returns from his title defenses. The two oldest children are studying judo, and Jade is considering acting lessons. Occasionally, people driving past the Harts' Calgary home will stop and gawk at the World Wrestling Federation Champion playing street hockey with his children.

During the long winter months, the activities shift indoors, where Bret has accumulated a medley of rubber masks from monster movies, mounted on walls throughout the house. "Blade, my youngest boy, is convinced he's me," Hit Man says,

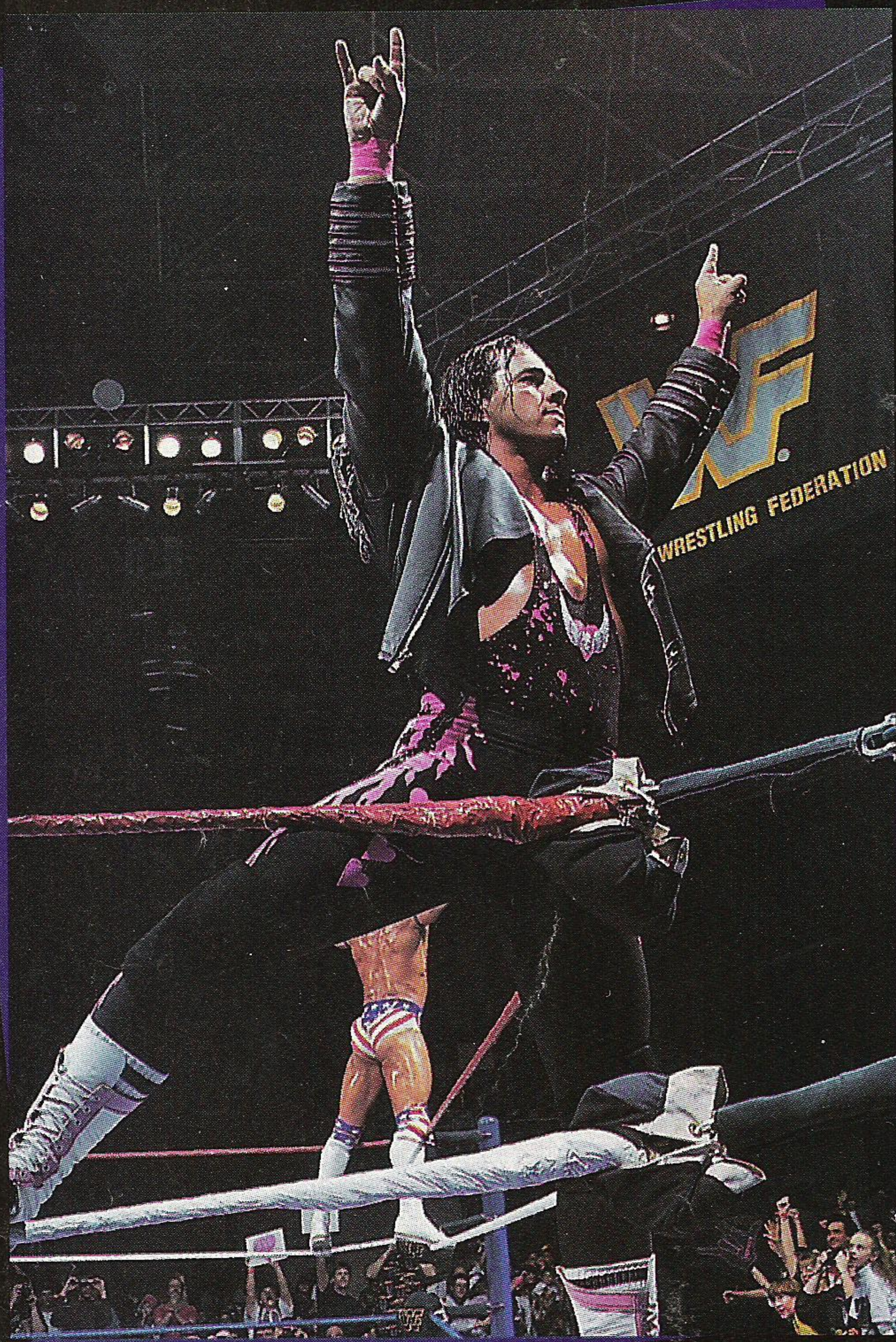


Bret Hart's Private Confessions

Bret Hart's Private Confessions

with more than a hint of pride in his voice. "He thinks we're superheroes who are going to solve the world's problems together. Sometimes, early in the morning, we walk from room to room, firing styrofoam balls at all the monsters."

Unfortunately, the majority of the time, Blade must battle the creatures alone, as his father is far, far away, locked in actual combat with the latest challenger for his belt. "It's part of the sacrifice that goes with being a champion," Bret says. "Even when people are all around you, shouting your name, clapping

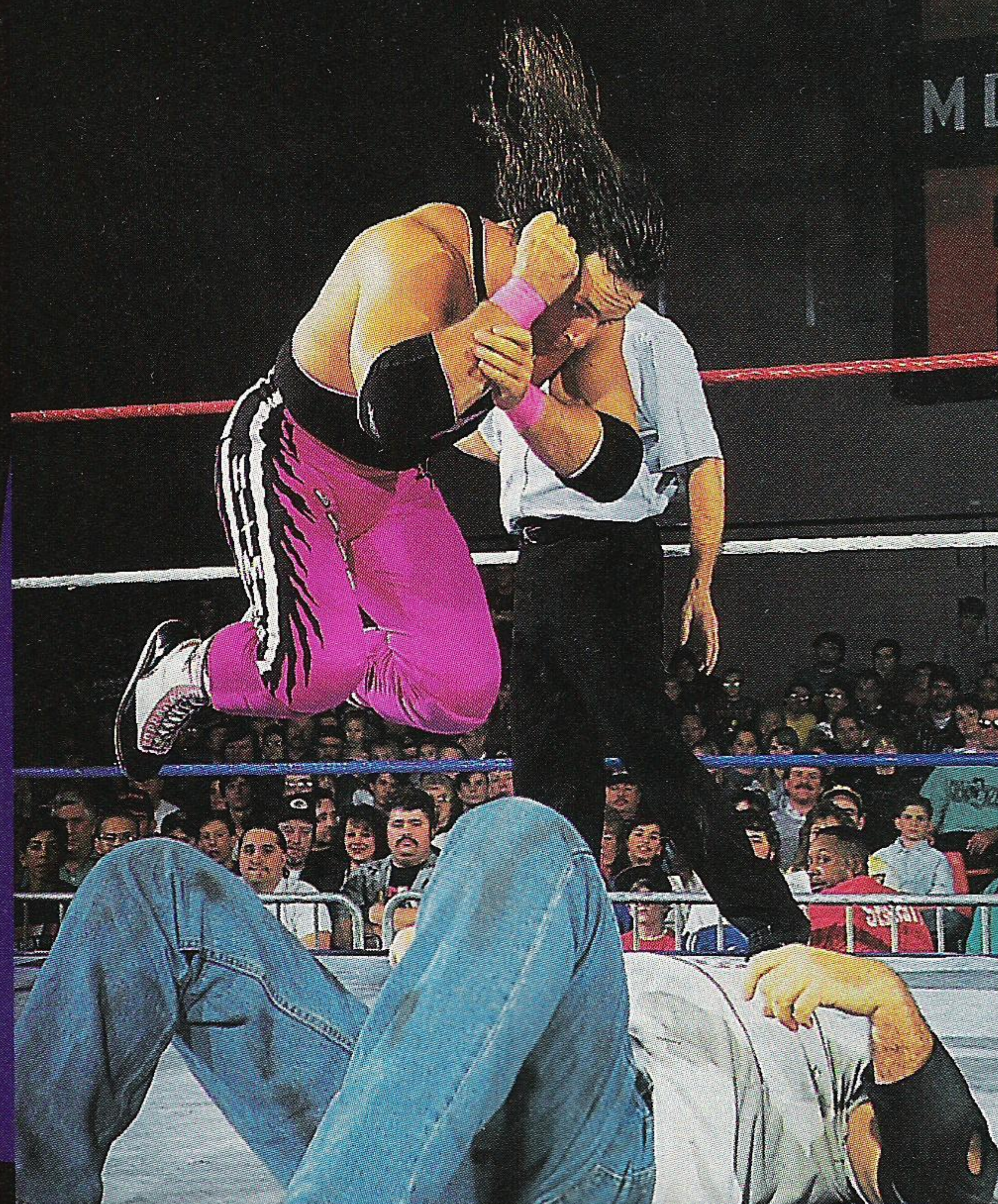


their hands and holding up signs with your picture on it, you think about your kids and wish that you could be home, helping them with their homework and tucking them in bed."

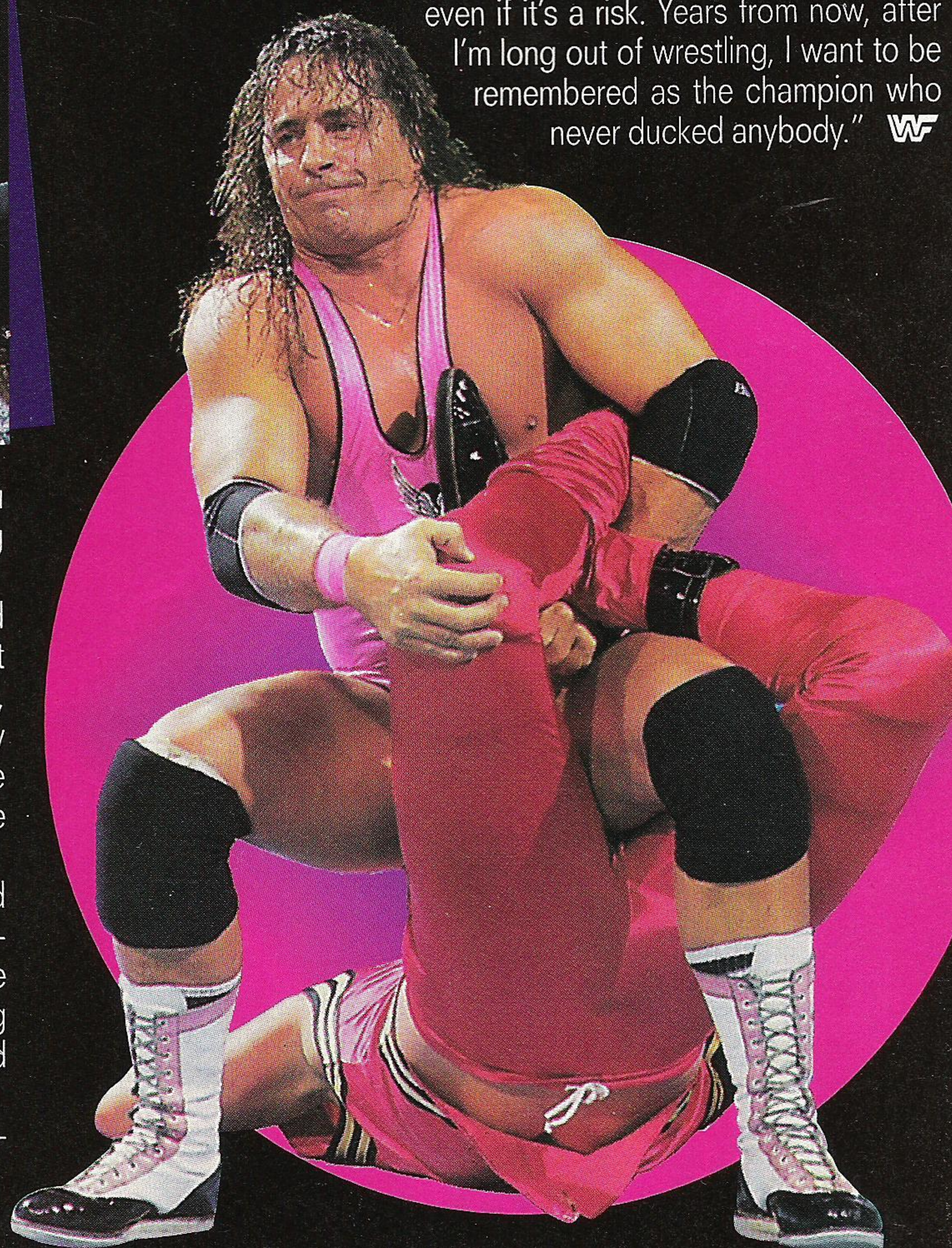
Yet, the rigorous schedule of the world's most celebrated athlete also has its merits, particularly for a person curious about the exotic reaches of the globe. On a recent Middle Eastern trip, Hit Man arranged for a special journey through the ancient city of Jerusalem, walking the very same steps Jesus is said to have taken while carrying the cross to Calvary. "I love history," he says. "I found the whole thing pretty fascinating."

But, like every other competitor on the tour, the Hit Man had to forget about the surrounding scenery and fight for his life between the ropes in the Holy Land. And, perhaps inspired by the biblical grandeur of everything he'd seen, the World Wrestling Federation Champion put on a performance that could be called—by some, at least—divine.

"I really do think I'm the Excellence of Execution," he con-



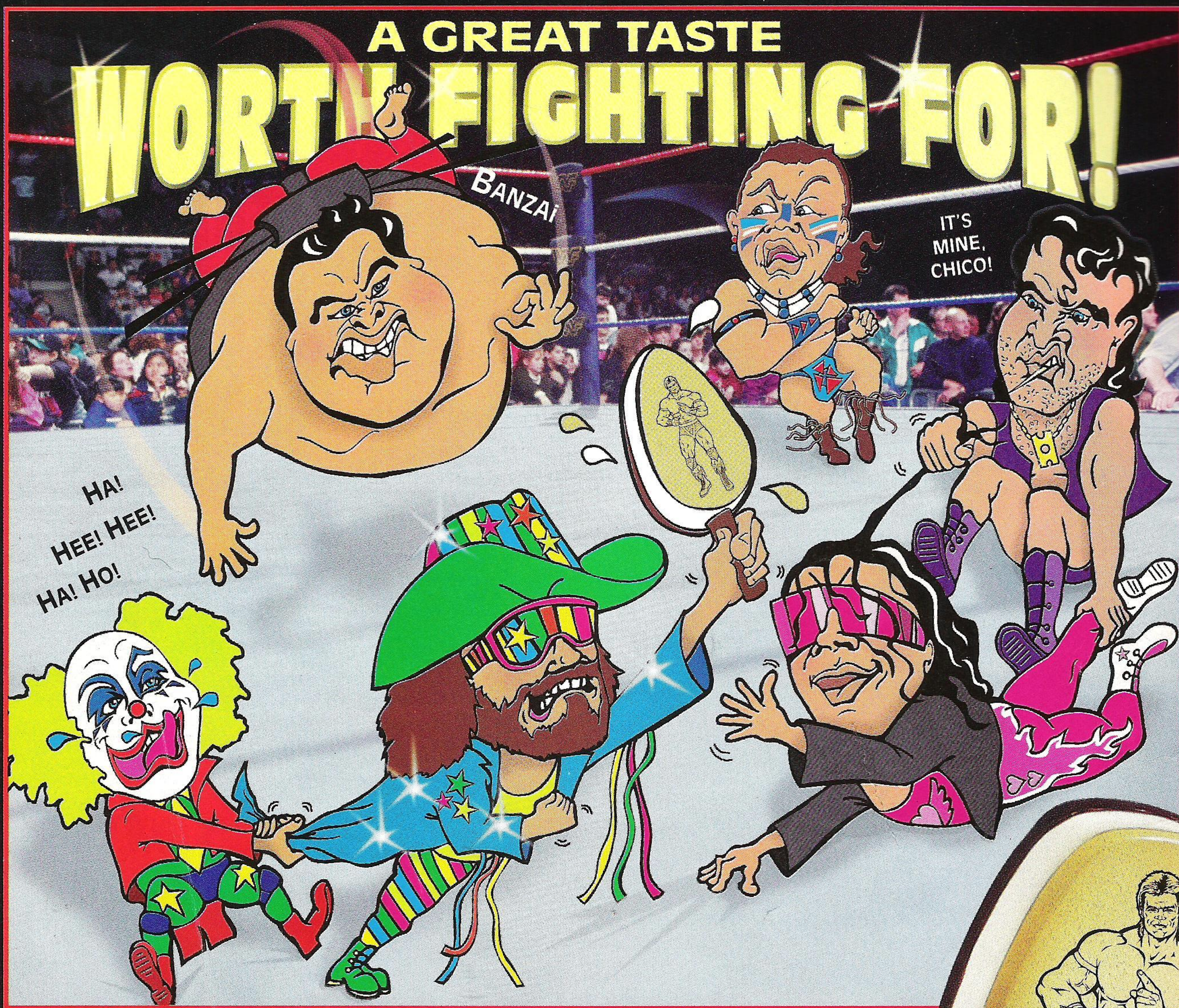
tends. "And I'm as good as I've ever been. I'm not ashamed of losing to a Yokozuna or to my brother Owen as long as I give it my all. I can only promise that now, as champion for the second time, I won't hesitate to take on any opponent—even if it's a risk. Years from now, after I'm long out of wrestling, I want to be remembered as the champion who never ducked anybody." **WF**



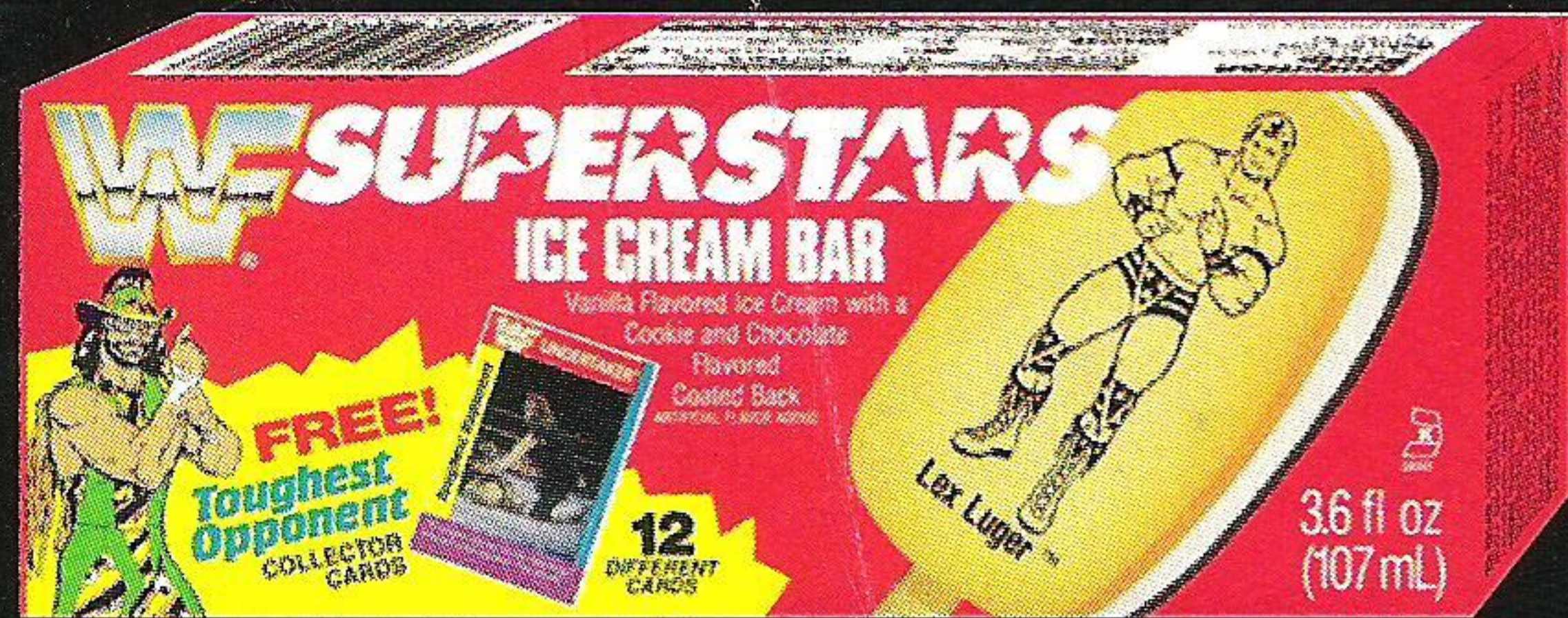


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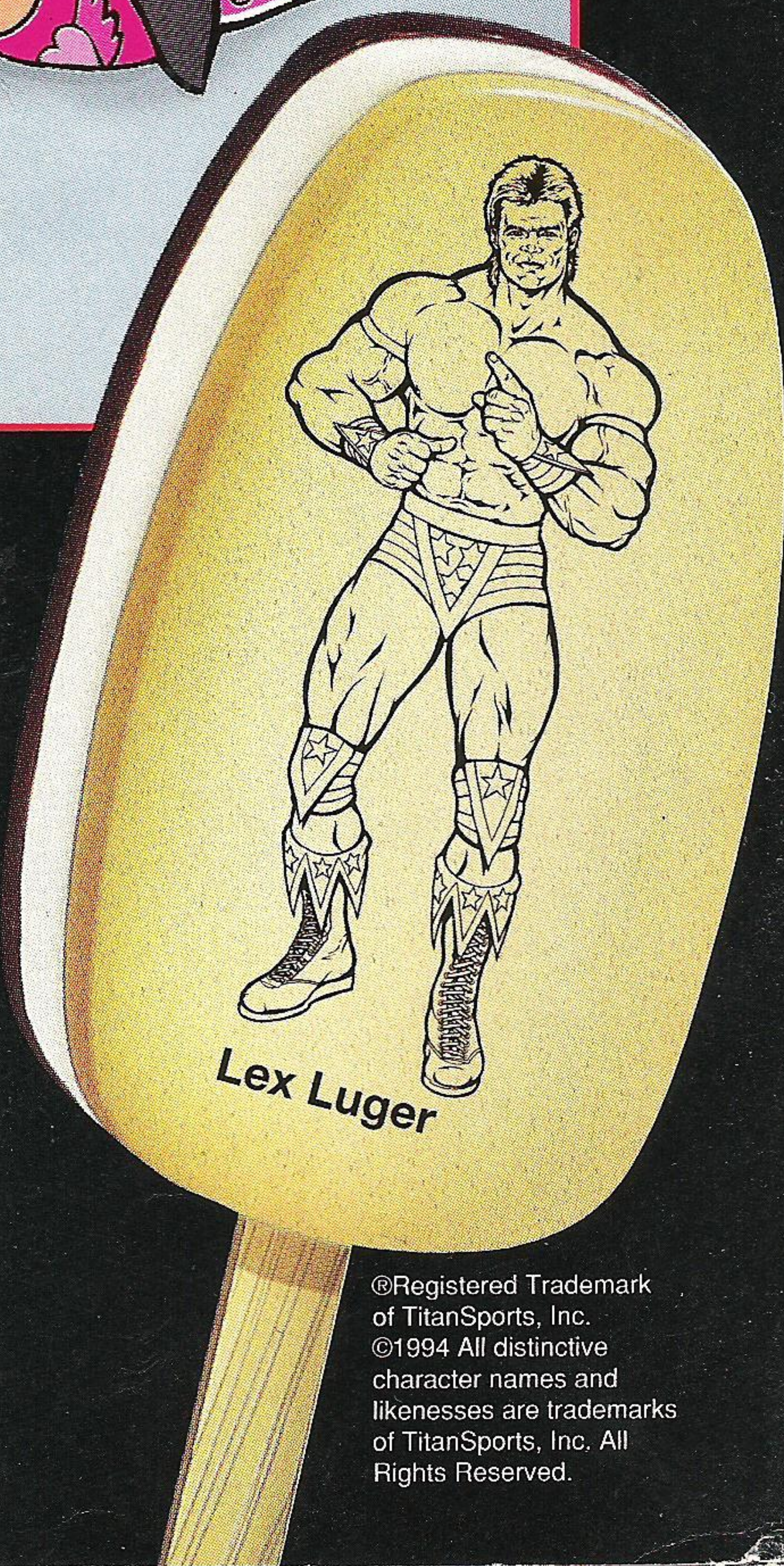
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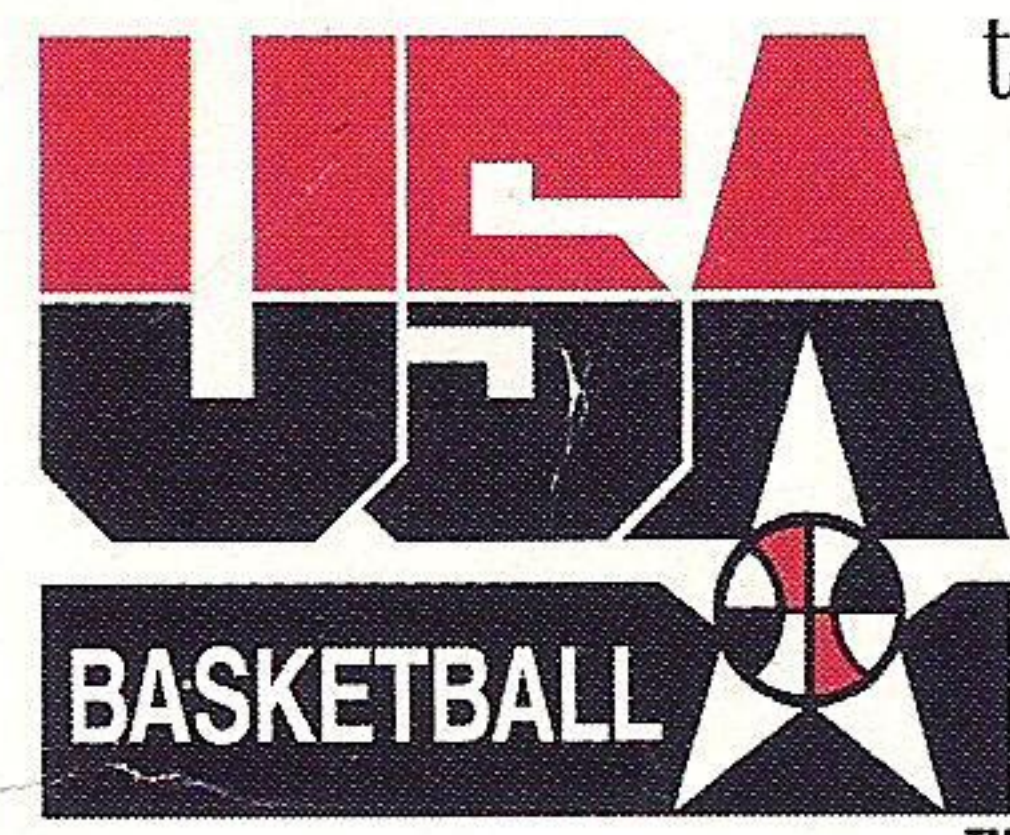


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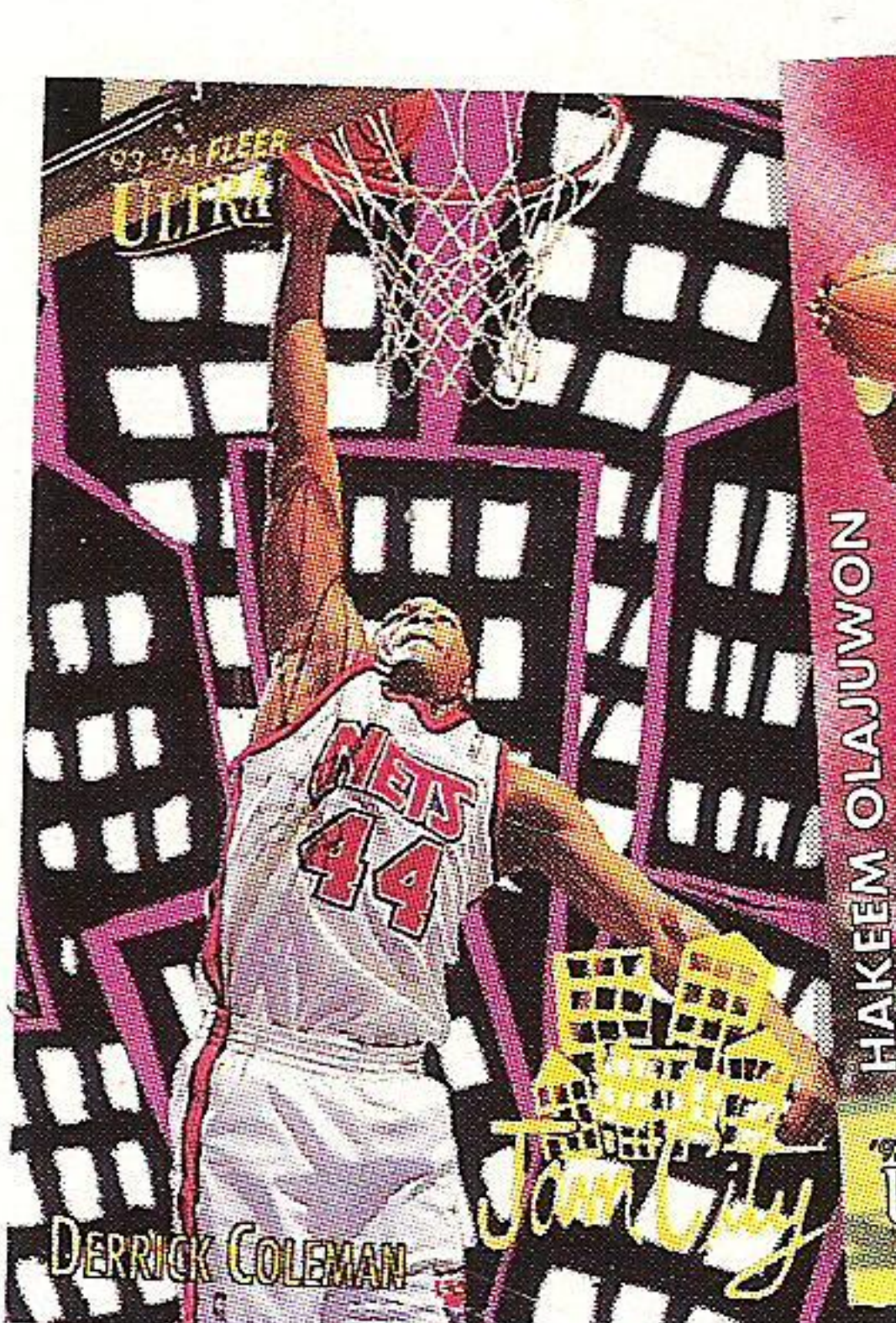


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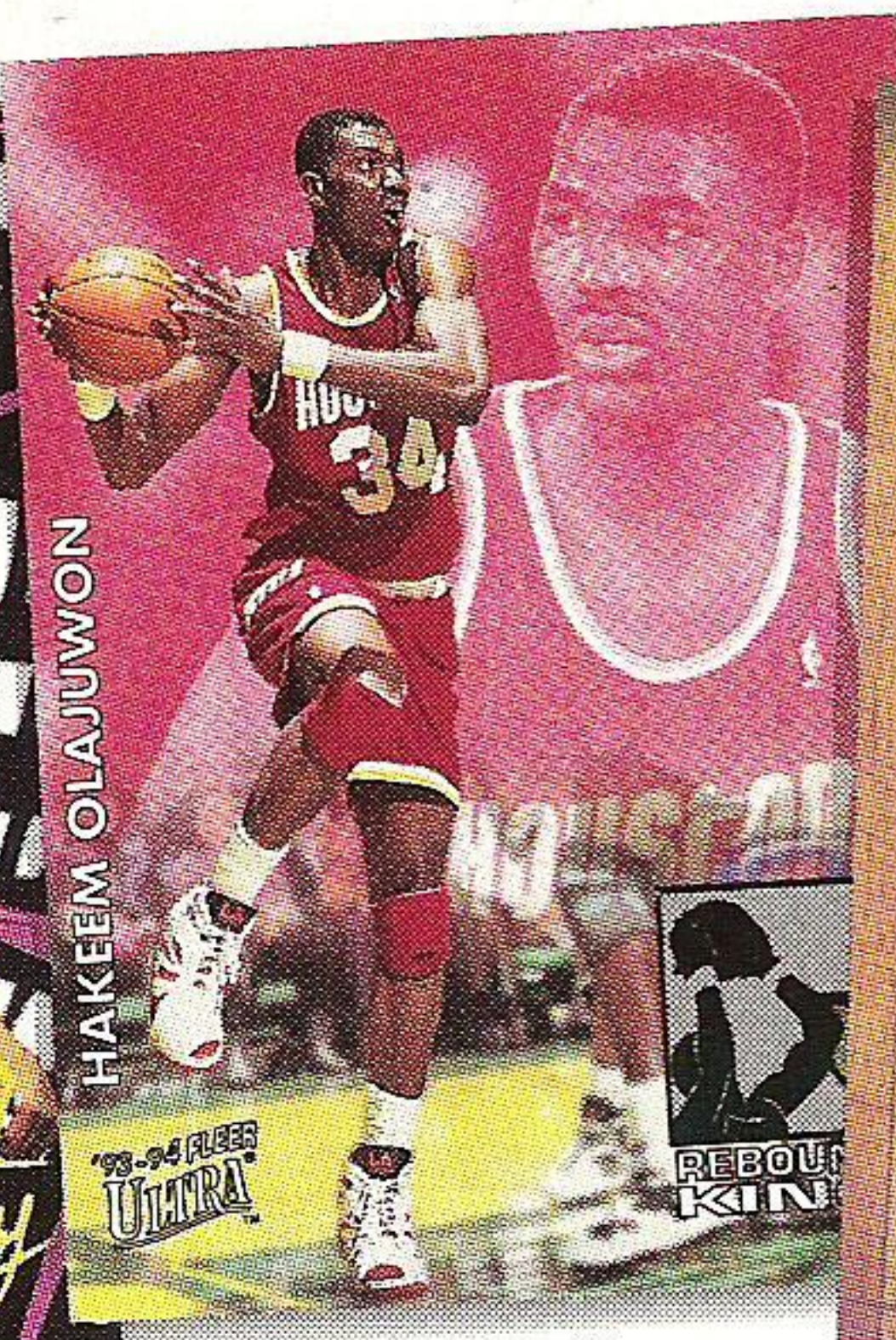
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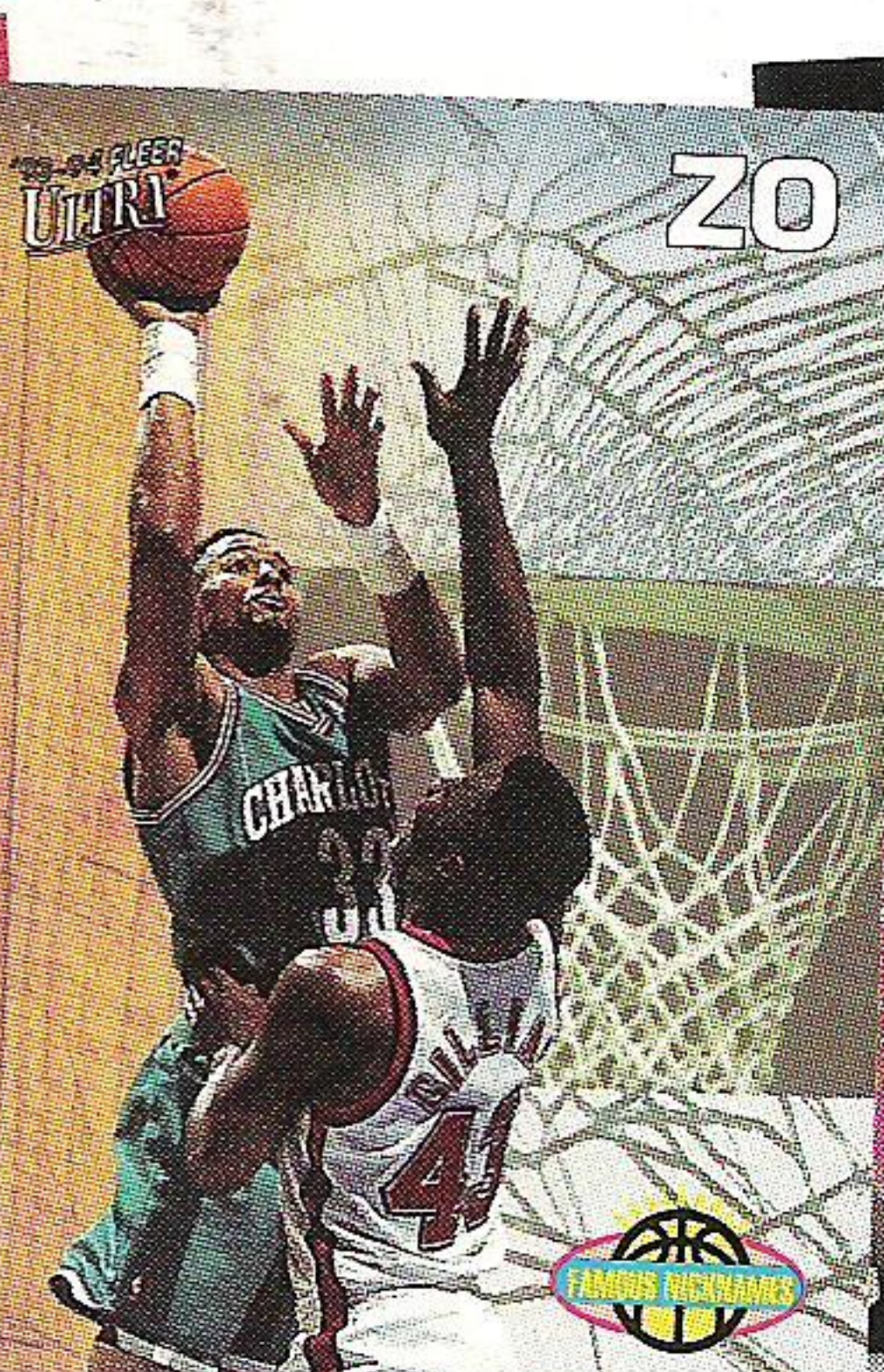
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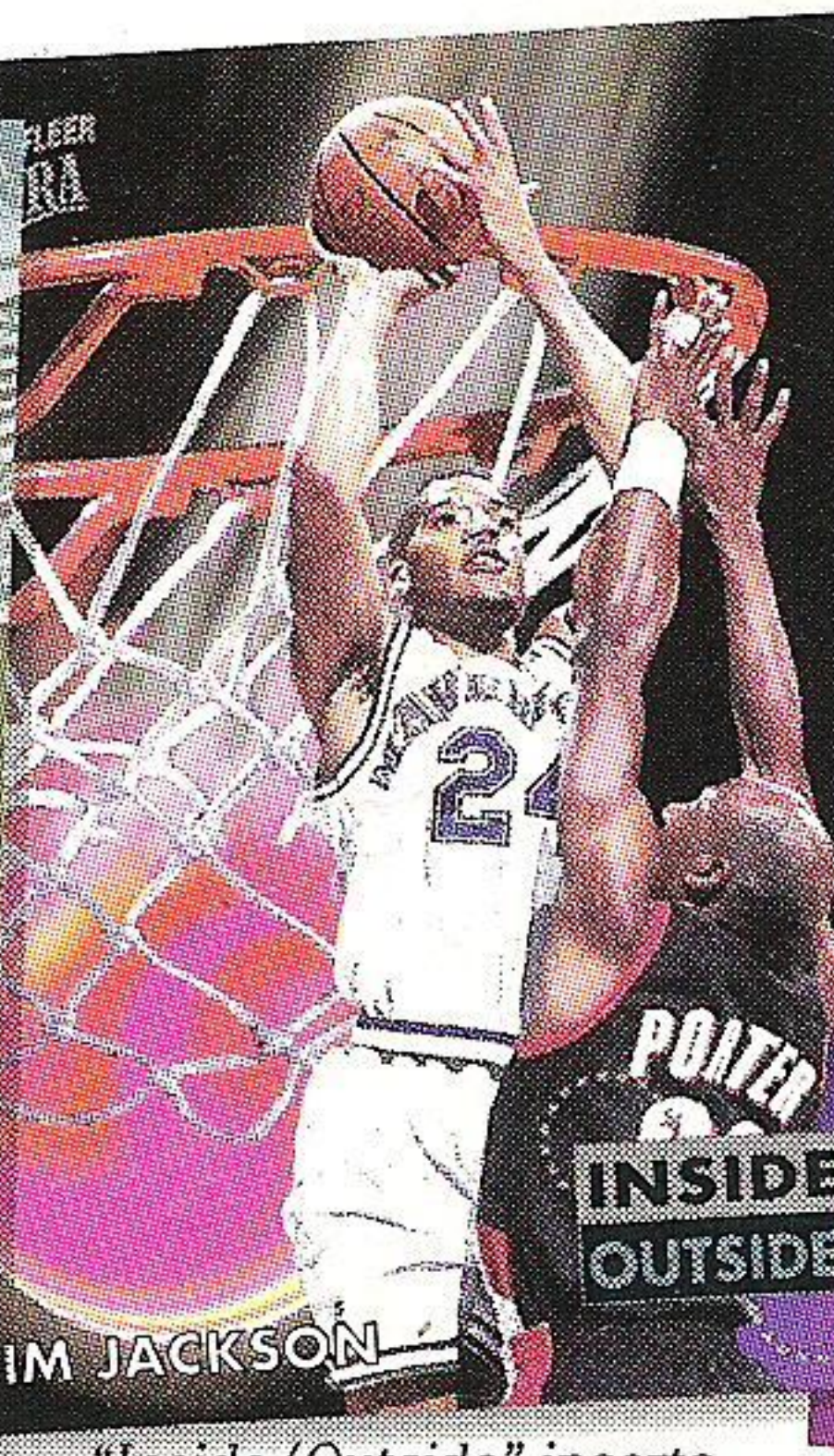
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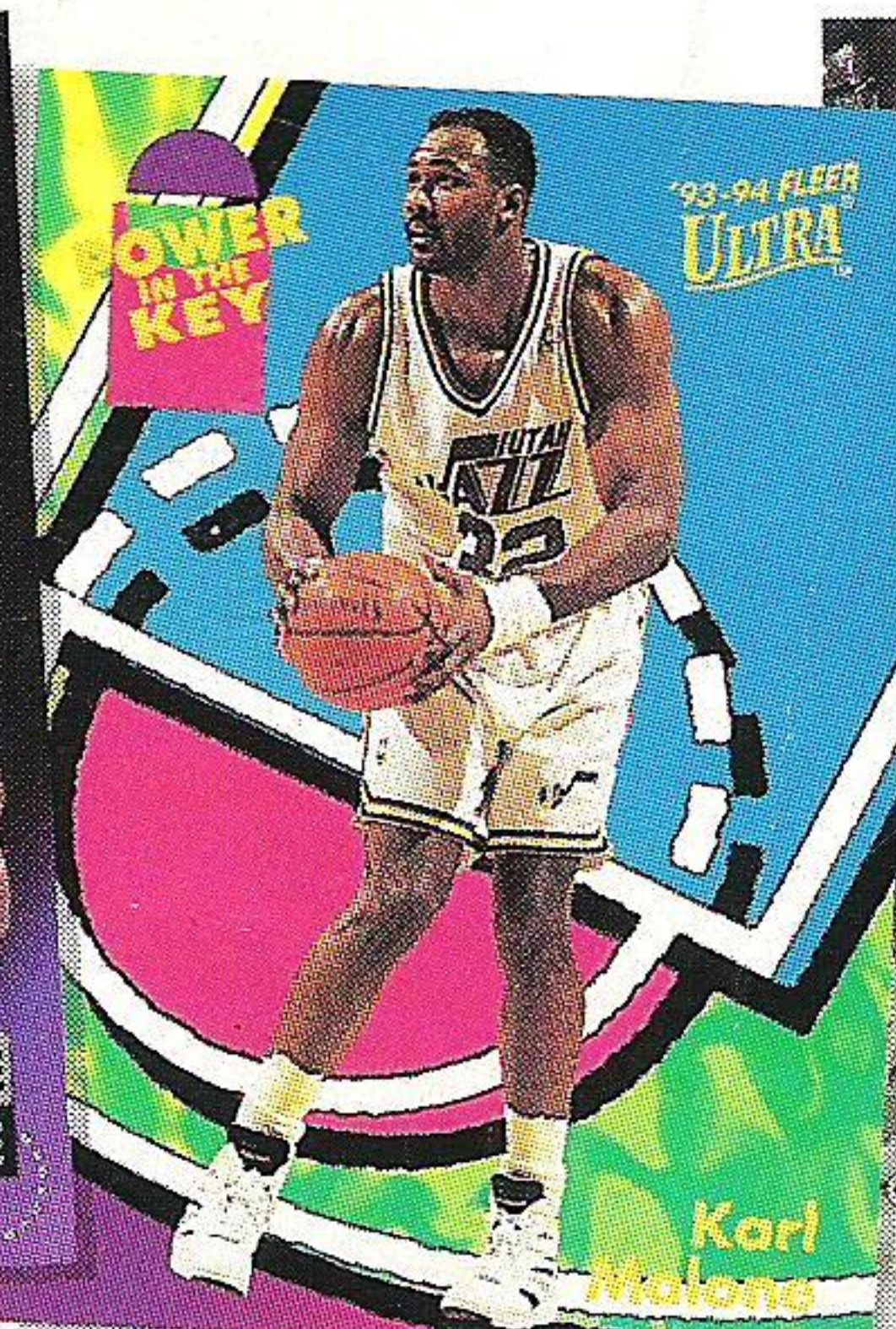
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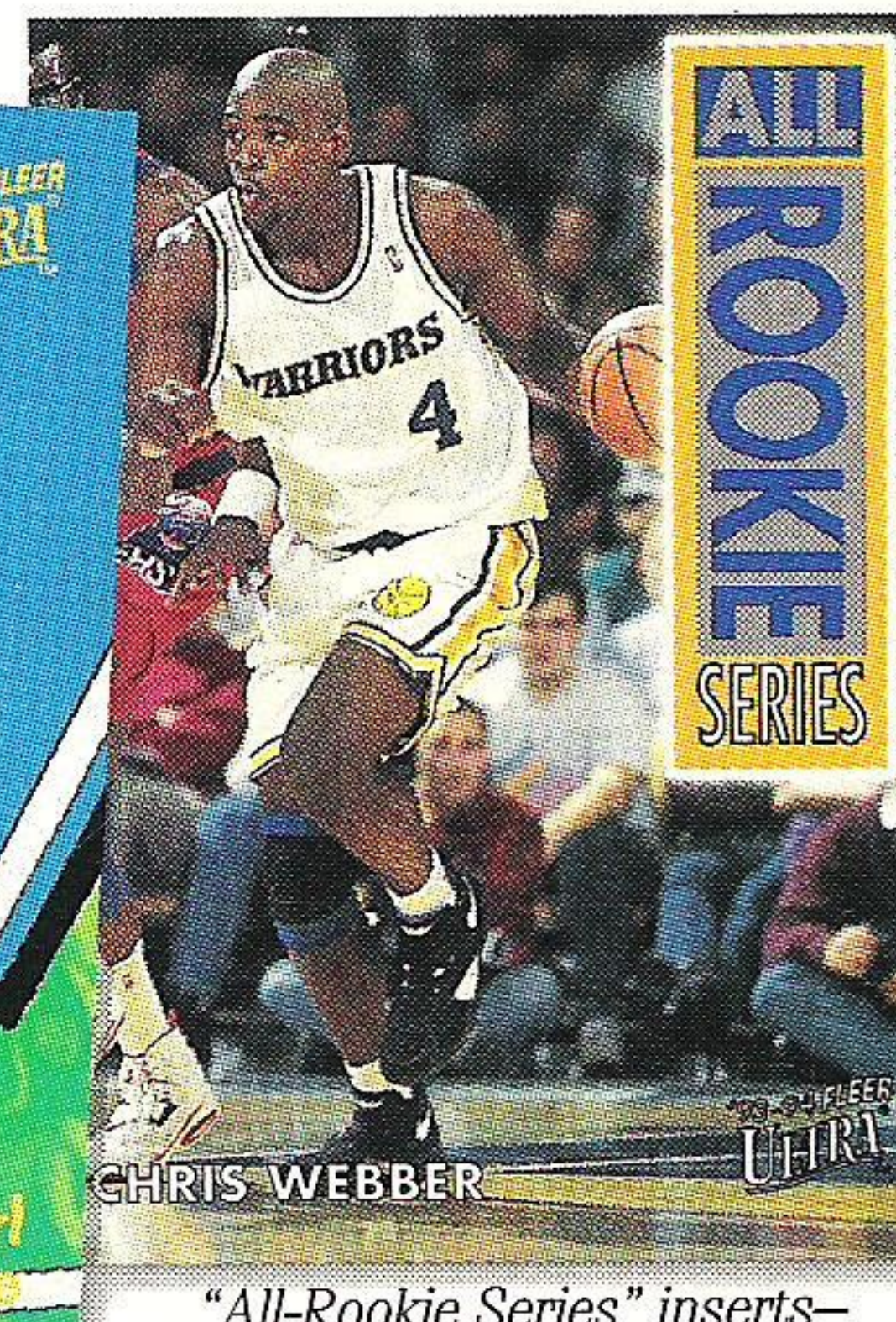
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